

# Flax Bourton Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109194
<b>Local Authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	337239
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Shirley Billington

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	98
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nigel Sommerville
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Bennett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 May 2007
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed seven lessons, sampled a variety of sessions in the Early Years Foundation Stage and saw six teachers teaching. Meetings were held with governors, staff and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including data on pupils' progress, the school development plan, curriculum planning and samples of pupils' work. 53 questionnaires returned by parents and carers were scrutinised.

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

- the effectiveness of steps being taken to improve provision for reading
- how the school tracks the progress of different groups and the impact of action it takes as a result
- the effect of strategies to close the gap in the performance of boys and girls in mathematics.

## Information about the school

This is a small primary school with four classes. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in one class. Each of the other classes caters for pupils from two year groups. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, but there is significant variation in the numbers in each year group. Most of these pupils have moderate or severe learning difficulties. A high proportion of pupils leave or join the school during the course of each academic year. An after-school club on site is run by a private provider.

The school has had several changes in staffing arrangements over the past two years. The substantive headteacher has been on maternity leave for most of this year and there has been an acting headteacher in her place. She has just returned to post under a joint headship arrangement.

**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

Flax Bourton is a little gem.' 'We are very lucky that our children go here.' Comments such as these demonstrate the high degree of confidence that parents and carers have in the school. Several praise the caring ethos and the high degree of attention given to meeting their children's needs. Their confidence is justified. Pastoral care is a particular strength of the school and all staff know individual pupils well.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they develop confidence and enthusiasm for learning. Their attainment at the end of the Reception Year is above average. In recent years, this good base has not been built on as successfully as it might have been and pupils' progress has slowed in Years 1 and 2. This has, in part, been the result of the frequent staffing changes. Pupils' performance in reading was particularly weak last year. More-stable staffing and enhanced provision for reading and targeted support for those who underachieved in Year 2 have resulted in significant improvement. The school has improved its systems for tracking the performance of different groups of pupils and progress in reading is now good throughout the school. Pupils do well in writing, which means that their attainment in English is exceptionally high at the end of Year 6. Mathematics shows a more varied picture, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' progress is uneven and not all pupils are secure in mental calculations or in understanding how to use their knowledge of number to solve problems. A variety of interventions and focused support have resulted in Year 6 pupils making accelerated progress in mathematics over this year so that their attainment is now above average.

Pupils make an excellent contribution to a wide variety of activities within the school and the wider community. The 'eco-warriors', for example, are proactive in suggesting ways to improve the environment. Pupils in each class are involved in planning what they might learn in the topics that they are studying. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Pupils enjoy a wide range of exciting experiences, including visits, sharing the skills of visitors and special events. Pupils are keen fundraisers for charity and many show a sensitive appreciation of the needs of others. However, their knowledge of the diversity of cultures represented in the United Kingdom is more limited because pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn first hand about different traditions. Senior leaders have high expectations and set challenging targets for pupils' attainment. Robust analysis of data and evaluation of the quality of provision, including regular monitoring of teaching, contribute to good systems for identifying the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders take swift and effective action to bring about improvement where necessary, as demonstrated by the quick response to under-performance in reading last year. They are aware of the areas that next need

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attention. The school has good capacity for further improvement.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils make progress at a consistent rate in mathematics by
  - improving their skills and confidence in mental calculation
  - extending the range of opportunities for problem-solving and investigative activities in subjects across the curriculum
- Extend pupils' awareness of life in a culturally diverse society by:
  - developing links with a school in a contrasting area
  - extending the programme of visits and visitors so that pupils gain a wider experience of the cultures found in the United Kingdom.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are keen to succeed and they work well together in pairs and small groups. In a science lesson, Years 1 and 2 pupils were very focused on testing a variety of objects to check which floated and which sank and animatedly speculated on the reasons for the results. The oldest pupils are mature and reflective learners. This was evident as Years 5 and 6 pupils shared their research findings on the life of the poor in Tudor times and expressed concern at the injustices that they suffered

The school's performance in national tests and assessments is very variable. The outcomes are affected by small numbers in each year group and a wide variation in the proportion with special educational needs/and or disabilities together with a high level of pupil mobility. However, over a three-year period, attainment at the end of Year 6 has been above average, with English being particularly strong. While there is some variation in the performance of boys and girls in different year groups, there is no significant trend over time. The school identified a gap in mathematics attainment last year with boys doing better than girls. Steps have been taken to address this and the gap has been reduced, but there is still work to do to ensure that both boys and girls make more consistent progress in this subject, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

Pupils have good awareness of the need to keep safe and of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They reflect on a range of issues during whole-school worship and in lessons and show keen appreciation of the wonders of the natural environment and their role in caring for it. Pupils are keen participants in sporting activities, but would like to see a wider range on offer. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school and pupils are confident that any untoward incidents are dealt with swiftly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from well-targeted support and make good progress. Good work habits, a good base of key skills and positive attitudes to learning result in pupils being well prepared for the next stage of their education and later life.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Lessons are well organised with detailed planning that takes account of mixed-age classes and the wide range of pupils' abilities. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils so that the pupils understand the purpose of each lesson and what they need to do to succeed. Good use is made of learning support assistants, particularly to help those pupils that struggle to concentrate and to guide individuals and groups through their tasks. Teachers make good use of assessment to revisit concepts when pupils are unclear or to introduce an extra element of challenge for those who are quick to learn. Lessons are purposeful and time is generally well used. Just occasionally, introductory sessions last too long and the pace of learning slows as a result.

A strong emphasis is placed on planning for the development of key skills for learning. These have a high profile throughout the school and lessons are linked to specific skills, such as enquiry or communication. Good links are made across subjects through the study of topics such as 'Change', 'How does your garden grow' and 'Rocking engineers'. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in subjects across the curriculum. Planning for the use of numeracy skills and for information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for learning is more limited. Pupils enjoy a good range of opportunities to participate in collaborative activities, such as performances and the creation of the striking murals at the entrance to the school. The school places considerable emphasis on personal, social and health-related

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

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education. It provides good additional support for individual pupils who may be experiencing barriers to learning. The work of the learning mentor and good links with a wide range of agencies contribute to targeted support programmes which meet specific needs. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is regularly reviewed, but the individual targets set for them are not always specific enough to assess precisely the gains that they have made

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

School leaders and governors share a strong sense of direction and continually strive to improve the quality of learning opportunities for the pupils. The governing body is well organised to fulfil its responsibilities. High priority is given to ensuring that safeguarding arrangements are robust. All pupils are welcomed and there is no room for discrimination. The school is becoming increasingly effective in checking on the progress of different groups, as well as individual pupils, and addressing any gaps that begin to emerge.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. The school itself is a harmonious community and pupils are regularly involved in a range of local events, such as an annual dance festival and inter-sports competitions. Links with the wider world have been promoted through work towards the 'International Schools' award, which led to a European week earlier in the academic year. Pupils learn about a variety of faiths through their work in religious education, but the school does not provide them with enough first-hand experience of the diversity of cultures represented in the everyday world.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in all areas of learning. They develop particularly good skills in communication, language and literacy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Many have good number skills and there is a current focus on promoting their understanding of how to use them to solve practical problems. A high level of attention is given to promoting children's welfare and, as a result, children show good understanding of well-established routines and systems.

There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Many children show an impressive degree of concentration as they work at their self-selected tasks. This was apparent, for example, as a small group made models from recyclable materials and persevered until they found ways to stick different shaped objects together. Occasionally, children's concentration wanes in whole-class activities because they have been expected to listen for too long

Learning diaries are used well to record children's progress. A variety of photographs, observational notes and samples of work demonstrate their achievements in different areas. Parents and carers are very positive about their children's good start to school life. As one explained, 'Our experience has been fantastic. We are looking forward to our next child starting in September.'

### *These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

There was a high response rate to the inspection questionnaires. A very large majority of parents and carers are happy with their children's experiences. All agree that their



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children enjoy school. They are very confident about the way that the school is led and managed. A few felt that their children's particular needs are not met well, but others commended the lengths to which the school goes to help their children. Inspectors found that there are good arrangements to meet pupils' individual needs through extra support and adaptations to the curriculum where necessary.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Flax Bourton 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 53 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 98 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	60	20	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	77	9	17	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	49	23	43	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	40	26	49	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	55	21	40	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	57	18	34	1	2	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	49	20	38	2	4	1	2
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)	23	43	22	42	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	45	23	43	5	9	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	42	28	53	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	51	21	40	2	4	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	35	66	17	32	0	0	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	70	13	25	2	4	1	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



20 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Flax Bourton Church of England Primary School, Bristol BS34 1UA

You may remember that I visited recently to see how you are getting on at school. Thanks to all of you who talked to my colleague and me and explained what you were doing in lessons and what goes on around the school. Particular thanks to the groups of Years 5 and 6 pupils who met with us. I thought you would be interested in what I am saying in my report. Yours is a good school and I understand why so many of your parents and carers are delighted with all that goes on there.

We found that the Reception children get off to a good start and that those of you in Years 1 to 6 are now making good progress. Some of you did not do as well as you might have done in reading last year but new books and extra reading sessions have helped you to catch up and you are developing very good skills in this area. You enjoy all the activities in which you get involved and are enthusiastic learners. Staff plan exciting topics for you to study and they make sure that you have good opportunities to use the key skills you are developing.

You behave well and have a good understanding of the need to stay safe and healthy. You make an excellent contribution to the running of the school by taking on responsibilities and contributing ideas for improvement. I was impressed with your suggestions for the new outdoor area for younger pupils.

Those people in charge of the school are always looking for ways to make it even better. We have suggested two things that they need to do now

- Make sure that you do as well in mathematics as you do in English by improving your knowledge of things like number bonds and quick ways of working
- Help you to learn more about the wide variety of cultures and beliefs that is found in the United Kingdom.

Thank you again for your help. Best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Shirley Billington

Lead inspector

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