

# Bishops Tawton Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113134
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	338101
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Sadler

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	129
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sam McKernan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Melanie Smallwood
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	0 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	School Lane Bishops Tawton Barnstaple EX32 0AE
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and a group of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including that concerning safeguarding of pupils, the tracking of pupils' progress and school development planning. Questionnaires returned by pupils, staff and 59 parents were analysed.

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

- the school's progress in developing effective self-evaluation, identifying priorities and taking appropriate action
- pupils' progress in writing, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 5 and 6
- whether the previous excellence in outcomes such as pupils' behaviour and their understanding of leading healthy and safe lives has been maintained
- the impact of teaching and the curriculum on pupils' progress.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average size and serves a residential village. Almost all pupils are of White British backgrounds. The proportion with special educational needs, mainly moderate learning or behavioural difficulties, and/or disabilities, is below average. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The school makes provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage in a class in which there are also some pupils in Year 1. The headteacher took up her post in April 2009.

**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

This is a good school in which pupils' achievement is good in almost all respects. They have an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lives and can speak in detail about the impact of, for example, diet, exercise and substance misuse on health. They make an outstanding contribution to both the school and local communities, for example as school councillors and through links with the local church. They behave well and say they feel very safe at school. Standards at the end of Year 6 declined in 2008. This reflected a wider decline in overall effectiveness since the last inspection. Nevertheless, in 2009 standards in reading and mathematics have risen again and are above average. Standards of writing are weaker, but the school has identified this and taken effective action to improve things, and there is good evidence that standards in this area are rising. For example, standards of spelling in Year 6 are above average, with pupils spelling words such as 'exhausted' and 'preliminary' with confidence and without reference to a dictionary. Pupils also attain standards above those expected in subjects such as science and geography. While progress is a little slower in the Early Years Foundation Stage, across the school all groups of pupils, including boys and girls and those of lower and higher attainment, make equally good progress.

Teaching has a good impact on pupils' learning. This is because there are good relationships between staff and pupils, who are usually well motivated by the tasks they are set. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. Indeed on occasion the tasks are somewhat too challenging for younger or lower attaining pupils. Generally, however, assessment is used well to identify their needs and to set appropriate work, or to direct the good support given by teaching assistants. Pupils have a good understanding of the targets they are set, and can give lucid explanations of how they use them to improve their work. They are motivated by the good curriculum and talk excitedly of opportunities to undertake activities in areas as diverse as surfing, gardening and crafts. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, limitations in the environment and resources, and excessive direction by adults, sometimes restrict children's opportunities to make choices and resolve potential conflicts appropriately. The school recognises this and is working to improve matters.

The recently appointed headteacher provides good leadership and has undertaken a detailed and accurate analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Other staff and governors are becoming more closely involved with this analysis. Many governors are new to their role and are undertaking intensive training. While they support the school well, they are not yet in a position to offer an effective level of challenge. They meet their legal responsibilities, but some documentation is of poor quality and requires updating. However, documentation required to ensure pupils are kept safe is of good

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quality. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of recent self-evaluation in successfully identifying weaknesses and hence improving teaching, standards of writing, and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage shows that the school has good capacity to continue to improve.

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

- Improve standards of writing so that by the summer of 2010 they are in line with the above average standards already attained in reading and mathematics. In order to do this:
  - ensure that pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage get plenty of opportunities to practise early writing skills
  - broaden the range of styles and purposes for which pupils in Years 1 to 6 learn to write.
- Improve governance by ensuring that:
  - governors have sufficient training to enable them to challenge the school to improve further
  - documentation is improved so that its purpose, audience and status are clear to the reader.
- Improve children's learning and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - enhancing the indoor and outdoor environment so that children have better opportunities for making choices
  - giving more opportunities for children to develop independent learning skills by reducing unnecessary intervention by adults.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school with the expected levels of skill and knowledge. In the Early Years Foundation Stage they make satisfactory progress. In reading, calculation and emotional development they make good progress, but progress in writing is not as good. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress in reading and mathematics, and evidence from their current work shows that they are starting to make good progress in writing. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. For example in 2009, all pupils leaving Year 6 attained at least the nationally expected standard in mathematics. More able pupils also make good progress, with most attaining the higher Level 5 in national tests and assessments.

Pupils learn well because there is a very positive and supportive atmosphere in the classroom. For example, when a pupil in Year 6 read out his sophisticated and penetrating sentence for use in a poem about a river, other pupils exclaimed 'Wow!', and applauded. In Year 3, the teacher displayed enlarged photocopies of a series of pieces of work by a pupil with special educational needs, to show the progress he had

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made over the term. Other pupils praised the work and the pupil's self-esteem was enhanced considerably. The school identified pockets of behaviour that required improvement and appropriate that were successful so that pupils' behaviour is now good. Pupils have a good general understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They have a good appreciation of the environment and of cultural issues, including respect for the range of British and world cultures. The skills they will need in later life are developing well. For example, at lunchtime pupils by choice and without supervision were weeding their vegetable plots, and could talk enthusiastically about crops they had grown and eaten, and what could be planted at this time of year. Pupils' attendance is above average, reflecting their enjoyment of school. At the time of the inspection all pupils, including those in the Reception class, were excitedly discussing the impending school council election, and who might be selected as officers such as chair or secretary. This was an example of their outstanding contribution to the community.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<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>1</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?**

Teachers are enthusiastic and plan work that generally meets pupils' needs. Information

<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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and communication technology is used well to motivate them, for example when Year 6 used a satellite map to study rivers in the local area. Teaching assistants give good support, for instance when working outside with lower attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 to develop their understanding of odd and even numbers. Sometimes work is a little too demanding. This occurred when pupils in Years 1 and 2 were asked to find patterns in the answers to sums through a task involving too many abstract concepts, which they struggled to understand. Assessment is used well to track pupils' progress and to identify those in need of additional help. All pupils have targets they use to improve their work, and teachers' marking supports this well. However, older pupils have limited knowledge of how their work compares with national standards. Pupils are cared for effectively well and adults know them well as individuals. However, paperwork such as that documenting support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is not always of high quality. There are good partnerships with other schools. Parents especially welcome the growing strength of the partnership with the local pre-school and most feel, rightly, that their children are prepared well for secondary school.

The school offers a broad curriculum which develops skills such as literacy and numeracy through other subjects such as geography, and the school intends to enhance this further. A few aspects, such as modern foreign languages, are less well developed than is usually found in primary schools. Pupils and parents value the wide range of additional opportunities, such as clubs and educational visits including residential experiences that are available to pupils.

*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?**

The newly appointed headteacher quickly identified the school's strengths and weaknesses and took decisive action to address the latter, seeking external support to improve writing, behaviour and the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching has improved through reallocation of classes to teaching staff and by reorganising the roles of teaching assistants. The newly constructed school development plan reflects her drive and ambition for the school, which is now obvious in the enthusiasm of senior and middle leaders to learn more about their roles. Parents also recognise that the school has greater direction, and many feel that communications with them have improved. Data are used well to analyse the performance of the school, to set challenging targets for improvement and to target resources. The similarly good progress of all pupils

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reflects the effective promotion of equality of opportunity. All requirements to keep children safe are in place and arrangements for child protection are effective. While pupils show a good understanding of, and positive attitudes towards, people of different backgrounds and cultures, governors have not formally analysed the school's contribution to community cohesion. However, under the direction of the new chair and with guidance from the headteacher, governors are rapidly developing a much improved understanding of the school's true performance than was the case in the recent past.

*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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children receive a satisfactory education in the Early Years Foundation Stage. In some respects, the provision is good and leads to good progress in some aspects of the curriculum. They make especially good progress in more formal situations. For example, a child was asked to describe a hidden object to her classmates. 'It's got six sides and eight points', she said. Another child correctly identified the object as a cube. This was a good introduction to mathematical problem-solving. There have been insufficient opportunities for children to develop writing skills, but this is now being rectified. The classroom and outdoor area are somewhat dated in appearance and resources, restricting children's choice of activities, although plans are in place to rectify this. When children are taking part in experimental play, such as with building blocks, there is too much adult intervention, slowing the development of their independence. Children are cared for well and there are good links with parents and increasingly so with the pre-school, reflecting the satisfactory leadership and management in this part of the



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school.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

### **Views of parents and carers**

Parents show high levels of satisfaction with almost all aspects of the school. A minority feel they are not kept well-informed about their child's progress, an issue of which the school is aware and is trying to rectify. Parents speak highly of the new headteacher and many recognise the impact of her work to improve the school.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bishops Tawton 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 129 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	59	24	41	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	63	21	36	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	22	35	59	8	14	2	3
My child is making enough progress at this school	20	34	34	58	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	24	41	34	58	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	34	32	54	4	9	3	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	53	27	46	1	2	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)	20	34	27	46	2	3	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	31	38	64	0	0	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	29	29	49	4	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	37	31	53	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	22	37	31	53	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	49	28	48	0	0	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 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"><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.**



14 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bishops Tawton Primary School, Barnstaple, EX32 0AE

We enjoyed meeting you when we inspected your school. We would like to thank those of you who gave up your time to talk to us. Yours is a good school; we enjoyed watching you learn, especially the way you help and praise each other as you make progress. You have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy and I enjoyed talking to the gardeners about the vegetables you have grown. You also behave well, both in class and around the school. You make an excellent contribution to the community. I'm sure the school council elections were a success!

You make good progress in your work and reach above average standards in English and mathematics by the time you leave Year 6. You told us you feel very safe and we agree that the adults do everything they can to keep you safe. You are taught well. Your writing is improving and I was impressed by Year 6's planning for a poem about a river. You enjoy the different activities, especially clubs and trips.

The headteacher and staff run the school well. They have lots of good links, especially with the pre-school and other schools, so you will feel confident when you go to secondary school. Your parents think highly of the school because the staff take good care of you and respect their views.

We have asked the school to do three things. We have asked them to give you more varied writing tasks, so that you can all write well, and to make some improvements so that children in Reception can learn more quickly. Many of the governors are new, so we have asked them to do more training so they can help the school to become even better!

Good luck in the future

Yours faithfully

Paul Sadler

Lead Inspector

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