

Bethany Church of England Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113844
Local Authority	Bournemouth
Inspection number	338252
Inspection dates	22–23 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Deborah Zachary

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Elizabeth Spreadbury
Headteacher	Stephen Orman
Date of previous school inspection	0 January 2009
School address	Knole Road Boscombe Bournemouth BH1 4DJ
Telephone number	01202 302406
Fax number	01202 391947
Email address	bethanyce@bournemouth.gov.uk

Age group	7–11
Inspection dates	22–23 September 2009
Inspection number	338252

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 three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited nine lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' progress, the school's records of monitoring of teaching and learning, the school development plan, and a range of other documentation. A total of 84 questionnaires completed by pupils, together with 48 questionnaires returned by parents, were also scrutinised.

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

- the learning and progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language, to determine the effectiveness of provision including support
- the school's strategies for improving teaching and the impact these have had
- how effectively senior leaders prioritise and monitor the impact of development strategies
- what school tracking shows about the progress made by pupils who have been in the school for at least a year.

Information about the school

Bethany Junior School draws most of its children from the immediate area, a neighbourhood which has recently undergone major changes in its socio-economic make-up. There is now a significant transient population and much higher than usual numbers of pupils arrive and leave the school without spending the full four years there. Some spend less than a year in the school. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was average at the time of the last inspection, but it has risen and is now well above average. A wide range of different ethnic groups are represented in the school. About two thirds of the pupils are of White British backgrounds, and the largest other group of pupils are from Other White backgrounds. About a quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language and about half of these are at the early stages of acquiring the language.

Bethany is federated with St Clements and St John's Infant School, sharing the same uniform, governing body, senior leadership team and headteacher. The infant school was inspected in April 2008 and this report covers only the junior school. Together, the federated schools received accreditation as Investors in People in June 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory and improving education for its pupils. It has many areas of good practice, and some are outstanding. For example, it works exceptionally well with other partners in education, health and social services and provides pupils with exemplary care, safeguarding and support. As a result the most vulnerable pupils make excellent progress and pupils feel extremely secure. Most pupils make good progress while in the school, and those who have been in the school for the full four years reach broadly average standards by the end of Year 6. However, Year 6 results as a whole are low and, because of this, achievement is judged satisfactory rather than better.

Teachers record pupils' attainment each half term and progress is carefully tracked by senior and middle managers. This tracking shows that pupils' overall progress for the last year has been good in all year groups, but there are two areas within mathematics and science where it has been slower. In mathematics, learning last year was more limited, though broadly satisfactory, for the majority of pupils in Years 3 and 4, including the more able. Conversely, older pupils (those now in Year 6) did outstandingly well in the subject. The school has already identified that in mathematics pupils can be confused by inconsistencies in the way some skills are taught in different year groups. In science, the more able pupils have not all reached the standards of which they are capable by the end of Year 6. The science curriculum does not give enough time to advanced skills and understanding for this small group. The school curriculum, nevertheless, is good, with strengths in new approaches to literacy, in enrichment activities and particularly in sport and music. Pupils thoroughly enjoy what the school has to offer and they themselves make an exceptionally strong contribution, not just to the school but also to the wider community.

The school has a good capacity to sustain improvement. The headteacher, senior leaders and curriculum leaders use a good range of rigorous monitoring activities to ensure they have a very accurate picture of how well the school is doing. Teamwork is highly effective and there is great enthusiasm to do the best for the children. Planning is effective: teaching has been a major focus for development and has much improved. Nevertheless, lesson observations and the school's monitoring both show that the pace of learning sometimes drops, for example when pupils do not fully understand tasks. Pupils are not always aware of what they are aiming to learn in the lesson, nor what they are aiming to achieve longer term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and improve learning by:

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

- telling pupils exactly what they are aiming to learn in each lesson
- ensuring that the pace of learning remains high throughout lessons for all groups of pupils
- making sure pupils' longer-term targets are useful and understood.
- Improve pupils' progress in mathematics in Years 3 and 4 by standardising the approach to the curriculum, including:
 - calculation methods and the use of number lines
 - mathematical language and its use in problem solving, particularly for the more able pupils.
- Increase the proportion of Year 6 pupils reaching Level 5 in science, by ensuring the curriculum gives close attention to higher-level skills and content.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Although there are many strong outcomes for pupils, standards at the end of Year 6 have remained significantly below average since the last inspection. Nevertheless, when pupils remain in the school for a good length of time they learn secure basic skills. They also embed good personal skills for the future. The pupils generally learn well and enjoy their lessons, particularly when they contain a clear practical task. They respond well to praise and listen closely. Their behaviour is good and they are able to work together and help each other sensibly. They respond quickly when asked to do something. They concentrate best when activities are short and varied and they understand the purpose of what they are doing. The pace of learning sometimes drops for periods of lessons, for example when pupils do not understand the task and they must wait for the teacher's attention. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well in lessons, usually with an extra adult and tailored work. As a result they make progress that is at least good. Some, often those who have a statement of special educational needs, make excellent progress because of the first-class support they get. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress. They feel very safe and secure and teachers usually make a point of checking they can access the work. Pupils who are only in the school for a short time also benefit from the very stable and secure environment. They settle well and make good progress. The most able pupils sometimes make good progress but there are areas in which their learning and progress are satisfactory, for example in science.

Pupils as a whole say they feel very safe, and are highly aware of what safety means in their own lives. Many face extremely challenging circumstances and they have great confidence and pride in the school. They have a good knowledge of how to take care of their health and take good advantage of the many opportunities for sport the school offers. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and they make excellent progress in their musical skills. They improve local open space with artwork and contribute greatly to neighbourhood events, working with different social and faith communities. They recycle with enthusiasm and devise and carry out actions to improve the school environment, often through the school council. Many pupils show strong care and concern for others; there are peer mediators to sort out problems and pupils are

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

training as play leaders.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching methods are chosen well to motivate pupils, and teachers ensure good behaviour through establishing clear simple routines. They usually make sure activities are brisk and focused, though occasionally pace drops. Recent development work on the consistent implementation of new strategies, across both classes and year groups, has proved successful. For example, new strategies for planning and teaching phonics work in graded groups are proving effective. In mathematics there is still work to do to ensure some visual aids, such as number lines, are used consistently. The school has also identified the need to establish a strategy for teaching problem solving ' where numeracy skills need to be applied to real-life problems ' but pupils sometimes find their language skills restrict them even where they have high mathematical ability. Some aspects of assessment are working well. Teachers are well aware of pupils' capabilities, even at this early stage of the year. They use questions effectively as a means to establish how well individual pupils and groups understand, demonstrating teachers'

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

strong subject knowledge. However, though teachers are starting to involve pupils more in assessing their own understanding, these strategies for learning and effective assessment are not yet embedded. In some lessons pupils are given useful success criteria at different levels of difficulty, so that the different ability groups have something specific to aim for and they can give the teacher clear feedback on whether they have understood. However, 'learning outcomes' shared with the class are sometimes too general or written in language that is too complex for pupils, so are ineffective.

Teaching assistants play an effective part in lessons, often teaching the lesson's content at an adapted level to small groups of lower-attaining pupils. They also support pupils who have specific special educational needs and those at the early stages of speaking English, working from very well-designed plans and programmes. Individual education plans have targets written in language the pupils can understand. The key to the excellent progress that the most vulnerable pupils make in the school, however, is the care they get and the security this gives them, even when they are in the school only a short time. Individual needs ' including social or health-related needs, as well as learning difficulties ' are meticulously explored and staff consistently go the extra mile to ensure outstanding provision. The school's exceptionally good strategies to raise attendance have ensured that it has improved significantly over the last year. The breakfast club is most effective in giving the pupils it serves a secure and nourishing start to the day.

Pupils of all backgrounds take advantage of the wide range of extra activities the school offers. The school is keenly aware of socio-economic circumstances, and tackles inequality through well-considered initiatives. For example it ensures that specialist music teaching and instruments are available to all, resulting in good quality performances. Horizons are broadened and expectations raised by many trips, including a residential visit to France.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders are totally committed to ensuring that the barriers facing their pupils are overcome, and that pupils are challenged to achieve as highly as they can. Over the last three years the headteacher has successfully ensured that management systems are in place to encourage this to happen. Tracking of pupils' attainment has been established and monitoring of pupils' learning by staff at all levels is now regular. Lesson monitoring is focused on school priority areas, and always identifies areas to improve. These are

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

followed up, though there is no system to ensure that the next lesson observer is always aware of individual suggestions the teacher has been given in the past.

An ambitious vision is embedded well among the staff and governors, and the drive for improvement is good. The federation with the infant school has demanded much energy and time from leaders and managers, but has paid dividends both for staff and for pupils, who have a secure transfer at the start of Year 3 because they are already very familiar with many faces and systems. Staff are highly aware of the backgrounds and needs of different groups of pupils as well as individuals, and safeguarding procedures are outstanding. There has been sustained improvement in the performance of disadvantaged groups; equality is promoted and discrimination tackled well. The school also promotes community cohesion well. There are some exceptional outcomes within the school and the locality, although its evaluation of this work is not yet rigorous.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

A comparatively small proportion of parents returned questionnaires. Those who did were almost all positive. Comments praised the school's relationship with parents, the quality of teaching and the children's enjoyment of lessons, especially music, and the great commitment of staff. Parents particularly appreciate the way teachers are available to them, saying things like 'the best asset the school has is its staff team'. Inspectors upheld these positive views. A very small number of parents commented on individual concerns about the school's communication with them. Inspectors judged that overall communication is good and relationships highly positive with most groups of

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

parents and carers. A very small number of questionnaires raised concerns about the progress of the most able pupils. Inspectors judged this to be satisfactory but not always as rapid as for some other groups.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bethany Church of England Junior 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 246 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	44	25	52	1	2	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	24	50	23	48	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	12	25	34	71	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	19	32	67	4	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	14	29	30	63	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	21	33	69	4	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	10	21	36	75	2	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)	12	25	28	58	3	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	12	25	28	58	4	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	22	27	56	4	8	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	26	26	55	4	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	36	25	53	2	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	19	40	25	52	2	4	0	0

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.



24 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bethany Church of England Junior School, Boscombe, BH1 4DJ

We really enjoyed visiting your school and seeing how it had improved since its last inspection. It is giving you a sound education but it has some outstanding things happening too, for example:

- the way you are looked after and kept safe
- the way you yourselves help the school and wider community ' well done!

We also saw lots of good things. You behave well and take care of each other. You learn well and enjoy your lessons because you are taught well. You told us about the fun things there are to do out of class too, and we were really impressed by how well you do in sports and music. The school is already trying to help everyone do well in other subjects, too. We have given your headteacher, staff and governors some areas to work on.

- We want teachers to always give you a clear idea of exactly what different groups of you are aiming for in each lesson, and to get you learning quickly. You can help by asking if you are not sure what you should be aiming to do or understand, and by trying to work as fast as you can.
- We want you to be clearer about what your subject targets are.
- We are also asking the school to help you learn better in mathematics in Years 3 and 4, and to help those of you who are good at science to reach higher standards. The school is going to look closely at what they teach and how they present it to you.

Thank you for helping us with the inspection, particularly those who talked to us or filled in our questionnaire. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Deborah Zachary

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.