

# Bishop Ian Ramsey CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114254
<b>Local Authority</b>	Durham
<b>Inspection number</b>	338324
<b>Inspection dates</b>	24–25 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Scott

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 aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	145
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Watts Stelling
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Peter Boyle
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Manor Road Medomsley Consett DH8 6QN
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one additional inspector. The inspector visited nine lessons, and held meetings with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. He observed the school's activities work, especially classroom learning, and analysed the school's documentation. He also took full account of the 59 questionnaires that were returned by parents and carers, as well as those from pupils in Key Stage 2.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following:

- the impact on standards of mobility of pupils and variations in year groups
- the extent to which teachers' planning ensures that groups of pupils achieve equally well
- the influence of information and communication technology (ICT) on the curriculum and on pupils' skills
- the contribution of community links and other partnerships to pupils' learning and personal development
- the rigour with which senior staff and governors work to raise standards in all subjects.

## Information about the school

This smaller than average school serves a community where socio-economic conditions are broadly average. Almost all pupils are from White British families; none speak English as an additional language. A high proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school recently moved into a new building and is one of two 'forest schools' in the North East of England.

**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 where pupils prosper in their work and personal development. Key to the school's success is its warm, supportive and very caring atmosphere in which all pupils are valued and acquire positive attitudes to work. Pupils are lively, confident, sociable and well behaved. Capably led by the headteacher, the staff work cohesively to ensure that pupils achieve well and leave at the end of Year 6 as responsible young people who are well prepared for their next school. Parents are very happy with the provision, 'a gem of a school', one wrote reflecting the views of others.

Teaching is good throughout the school and, occasionally, even better. Teachers use assessment information well to prepare lessons to meet the different needs of pupils. Clear explanations and sensitive support from teachers and teaching assistants help pupils to learn readily and effectively. As a result, pupils consistently make good progress through the school. Standards fluctuate between average and above average, depending on year groups, but they are usually above average by Year 6. The high level of support for vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities enables them to achieve equally well in their work.

Nevertheless, there is scope for higher attainment in all subjects, including ICT. The curriculum is essentially good, and concentrates rightly on developing basic skills. There is a good range of extra experiences in outdoor pursuits, sport and focused visits, though the school has yet to establish a routinely creative curriculum for pupils every day and give greater meaning to learning by, for example, applying it in real-life situations.

The school's leadership has done well since the last inspection to maintain good standards and implement some important changes. The calm, firm and enlightened leadership of the headteacher keeps staff motivated and well equipped to promote change. Issues of inconsistency in teaching and weaknesses in ICT provision and boys' writing have been addressed. However, the school's plans for development are not linked closely enough to the expected outcomes for pupils, nor is the progress of these plans monitored closely enough by senior staff and governors. This is exemplified in the school's approach to community cohesion, which is not fully developed, especially in terms of links with the wider world and multicultural understanding. Overall, though, the school is in good hands, in good shape and well placed to sustain continued improvement.

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

- Improve pupils' attainment in all subjects, including ICT, by:

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- ensuring that teachers maximise opportunities in lessons for creativity and increased links between subjects
- linking action plans for improvement more firmly to pupils' outcomes and monitoring their impact more closely.
- Develop community cohesion by:
  - conducting a fuller analysis of existing strengths and weaknesses and developing more detailed plans
  - strengthening links with the local and wider world communities.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

All pupils enjoy learning and achieve well at the school, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Common to all classrooms is a warm, encouraging and friendly atmosphere and it is no surprise that pupils are attentive and eager to work. Attainment by Year 6 varies to some extent because of the different abilities of year groups. Standards are sometimes average but usually above average, as they were in 2009. A good number achieve the higher Level 5 in the national tests, but standards at Year 6 tend to be diluted by the number of pupils leaving school before Year 6 to attend other schools.

In 2009, the premature departure of 30% of pupils, all expected to reach Level 5, certainly influenced the overall outcomes.

Standards by Year 2 are mostly average and sometimes better. A strong focus on writing has enabled pupils to reach above average attainment in 2008 and 2009. From time to time there are differences between groups of pupils. For example, girls sometimes outperform boys. However, the school's analysis shows that there are no consistent disparities among pupils.

Pupils mature well at the school. They become responsible, not only in terms of their own learning, but also as 'citizens' of their school. They are understandably proud of their new premises and through the school council strive to make it even better. They understand the importance of a healthy diet and their good take-up of the many after-school activities demonstrates their active lifestyles. Behaviour is good. It is often excellent in lessons, although not all pupils sustain a swift pace of learning. They gain a good sense of spirituality through, for example, art appreciation, work in the woodland and through a close bond with the church. Links with the village and the world beyond are not well developed. With good social skills and good standards of literacy and numeracy, pupils are well prepared for life ahead.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<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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<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>3</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. The support by all staff is very good for individual pupils and groups of pupils and is especially effective for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils feel valued and understand how to improve. Teachers are good at explaining new topics, asking questions and providing clear objectives. They generally use assessment well to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities but some planning could be more sharply focused.

Lessons often contain interesting activities that motivate pupils and put learning in context. For example, interactive computer games clearly enhanced pupils' concentration and abilities in multiplication in a Year 6 mathematics lesson. Although work in lessons is well focused on key skills, not all lessons regularly contain diverse and interesting topics that rapidly boost the breadth of pupils' learning or enable pupils to apply skills in given situations. The curriculum is good. Visits to places like Beamish and Hadrian's Wall add a vital spark to learning. The improved school facilities, for example in ICT and art, as well as the excellent woodland resource, are broadening pupils' opportunities.

Parents and carers are understandably pleased with the quality of care provided by the school. Pupils feel safe in school because staff take good care of them. The needs of the more vulnerable pupils are well known to staff, who respond swiftly to any concerns and provide support to families to ensure emotional stability and continuity of learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<p><b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b></p> <p>Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms</p>	
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<p><b>The quality of teaching</b></p> <p>Taking into account:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The use of assessment to support learning</p>	<b>2</b>
	2
<p><b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b></p>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b></p>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The new school building is a source of much pride and a tribute to the hard work and dedication of the headteacher, senior staff and governors. The leadership has good ideas and the combined will to improve the school. It succeeds in identifying and developing important areas that will benefit pupils' learning and well-being. Writing has certainly improved for all pupils since the last inspection, including boys. Now that the school has better technical resources, pupils have the scope to become more proficient in ICT. The consistency of teaching, an issue at the last inspection, has improved because of regular support and guidance, especially by the headteacher. The school is successful in tackling discrimination of any kind and in ensuring that all pupils benefit equally from its provision. However, development plans are not linked clearly enough to intended outcomes.

Governors ensure that statutory requirements are met, including the safeguarding of pupils. They are fully involved with the school's development and contribute valuable expertise, such as accountancy and project management. However, the approach by governors and senior staff to monitoring the school's progress is not structured enough to ensure even swifter progress. The school has forged fruitful partnerships with agencies beyond the school, for example to tackle the persistent absenteeism of a very few pupils. With the new building, the school has advanced plans for greater links with the local community. However, the school has not been systematic enough in its approach to community cohesion to raise the profile of ethnic diversity and global awareness.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<p><b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b></p> <p>Taking into account:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The leadership and management of teaching and learning</p>	<b>2</b>
	2
<p><b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b></p>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b></p>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b></p>	<b>2</b>

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<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

The Reception class provides a good start for children at this school. Children rapidly settle in the very welcoming and supportive environment; they respond readily to staff and show an eagerness to work. They tend to enter school with good personal and social skills for their age which enable them to listen well, respect others and behave well. Overall, attainment on entry is usually typical of four-year-olds, although their language skills are often underdeveloped. In some years, attainment is below that expected when they start school. Assessment procedures are not rigorous, but data certainly confirm that children make good progress in the Reception Year. Teaching is lively and well-focused, taking good account of children's individual needs and previous learning. The support for vulnerable children by all staff is very good; pupils with severe problems are thus enabled to play a full part in school life. The varied activities, inside and outside, inspire children. The fairy theme involved children in dancing, making fairy cakes and designing a home for fairies in the woodland. Children have ample scope to pursue their own interests, although activities are not always challenging enough. For example, the pace of learning falters when children are required to listen for long periods. With the impressive teamwork of staff and the enthusiastic leadership of the teacher, the provision is developing well.

*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

Parents have a good opinion of the school. Many sing its praises and are very happy with what it provides for their children, especially in the inspiring ethos that stems from the headteacher and all staff. They feel that their children make good progress and are well equipped for their future education. They are also appreciative of the very good



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level of care throughout the school and always feel welcome. Several parents and carers provide expertise in after-school clubs. Many raise funds which have paid for valuable resources, such as its all-weather sports pitch. A small number of parents and carers have individual concerns but there are no common or significant issues.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bishop Ian Ramsey CofE 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 inspector received 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 145 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	65	34	29	4	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	94	78	25	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	66	55	49	41	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	56	47	39	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	75	63	43	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	53	49	42	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	81	68	38	32	0	0	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)	63	54	49	42	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	71	61	40	34	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	49	43	54	47	6	5	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	44	59	50	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	80	68	34	29	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	87	73	29	24	0	0	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"> <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.**



I am writing to thank you for the part you played in the recent inspection of your school. I enjoyed meeting you all. Your views certainly helped to me to get to know your school better. I was impressed by your behaviour, your concentration in class, your healthy and active lifestyles, as well as your common-sense approach to life.

You go to a good school, much improved by the shiny new building. You achieve well in your work because teaching is good and you have positive attitudes to learning. Your teachers try to make learning interesting and allow for your different abilities. Staff are very good at supporting those of you with particular difficulties. As a result, standards are usually above average for your age. I do feel, though, that standards could be higher if teachers made all lessons more imaginative and used real-life situations so that you could use your new learning in a more meaningful way. I have asked the school to ensure that all lessons are as much like this as possible.

Your headteacher, staff and governors work well together to improve your school. I think your woodland is great and a very good resource for learning. Your all-weather pitch is also a fine asset and I am sure you cannot wait to use your new field. Your writing has improved and you are poised to improve your computer skills now that the right resources are in place. The school links up well with people and places outside school to provide you with valuable experiences. I would like it to do more to help you work with the local community and to understand the wider world, including its cultural differences. I hope you will respond positively to such opportunities. I have also asked the school to keep a close eye on its plans for improvement so that they all bring about the best results for you.

I wish you all the best for the future.

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