

# Bedmond Village Primary & Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117248
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	338977
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Thompson

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>	117
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Pat Rootes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Danuta Wall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	Meadow way Bedmond Hertfordshire
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors, one of whom visited the school for half a day specifically to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding procedures. The reporting inspector spent the majority of the available time observing pupils' learning. In all, he observed all class teachers at least once as he visited eight lessons and, in addition, observed pupils at work in the information and communication technology (ICT) suite. The inspector held meetings with the Chair of the governing body, the teaching staff and groups of pupils. He observed the school's work, and looked at a range of information, including data showing the progress made by pupils and samples of pupils' work. Questionnaires returned by 24 parents, 53 pupils, and 15 members of staff were analysed.

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

- the achievement of pupils in English, particularly the more able
- the effectiveness of teachers in providing achievable challenges for pupils
- the impact of middle managers since the last inspection.

## Information about the school

This is a small rural school. Most of its pupils are of White British heritage. The remainder are from a wide variety of minority ethnic groups. The largest of these are Gypsy/Roma and Travellers of Irish heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Most of these pupils have either general learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social problems. Owing to movements of families in housing association accommodation, the turnover of pupils is high. Typically, about 40% of pupils either join or leave during the course of each school year. Recent movements of pupils resulted in a reduction from six to five mixed-age classes. At the time of the inspection, two of the teachers were relatively new in post. The school has Healthy School status and the Activemark, and was recently gained the intermediate level International School award.

**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**

**3**

### Main findings

Bedmond Village Primary provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It provides effective care, guidance and support, which results in their good personal development and well-being. Most pupils say they are well cared for, knowing adults will always help them. Pupils clearly know how to keep safe, and show a good understanding of the importance of pursuing a healthy lifestyle. These achievements are recognised by the Activemark accreditation and Healthy School status. There are regular opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of sporting activities. The school invests a great deal of effort in successfully helping pupils to develop socially; behaviour in lessons is invariably good, and most pupils work well with their classmates. Consequently, lessons run smoothly and without undue disturbance. Pupils are invariably polite and enjoy learning. One pupil commented, 'Teachers are great, they help us learn and we get to do lots of fun things!'

Pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2, and their attainment is broadly average when they transfer to secondary education at the end of Year 6. The school has adopted a number of initiatives which are having a beneficial effect in improving teaching techniques and adding impetus to the development of the curriculum. However, the system for setting medium-term targets for pupils to achieve over a number of weeks is not yet fully effective. Pupils said that they are unclear about some of these targets, particularly in mathematics. This is because they are too wordy. A key improvement in teaching is that learning objectives are routinely shared with pupils during lessons, although these are not always presented in language that pupils can easily understand. The success criteria which underpin these learning objectives generally lack clarity and precision. In some instances they are not shared with pupils. Therefore when pupils evaluate each others' work they do not always know precisely what they are supposed to be looking for. The lack of clear linkage between the success criteria and the National Curriculum statements of attainment means that pupils' progress is not being accelerated as sharply as it might be. Teachers ensure that pupils' work is regularly marked, but marking makes little reference to the targets set for pupils to achieve.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because their individual learning needs are clearly identified and skilled teaching assistants provide good quality support for them.

Improvements recently made in the Early Years Foundation Stage have had a significant impact on children's achievement and provide a good platform for future development. Children now get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes because of improvements made in the quality, accessibility and use of resources.

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The curriculum is very carefully planned to ensure continuity of learning in mixed-age teaching in all classes. One of its strengths is that its cross-curricular themes, which are planned in response to pupils' views, generate high levels of interest and enjoyment and provide significant enrichment to pupils' education.

Governors are supportive and have an impact on the life of the school, for example through their work in improving health and safety procedures. They are also effective in ensuring that all legal requirements are met. However, they have too little impact in helping to raise standards, partly because a number of governors are relatively new. The new Chair of Governors recognises that much needs to be done to ensure that all governors have the knowledge and skills necessary to provide independent challenge to the school's leadership team and to take a clearer strategic view. The school's systems for checking on the progress made by pupils are thorough and provide useful data for the senior leaders. Their procedures for evaluating its effectiveness are sound. These features and the impact of actions taken to improve pupils' achievement demonstrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- By July 2010, improve the quality of teaching and pupils' learning by ensuring that:
  - at the beginning of lessons, teachers always make intended learning clear to all pupils, using easily understood language
  - when planning and delivering lessons, teachers place a sharp focus, closely linked to the National Curriculum statements of attainment, on precisely what pupils need to do to improve their work
  - teachers set medium-term targets for pupils to achieve that are clearly expressed, specific and measurable, so that pupils will know when they have achieved them
  - teachers' marking of pupils' work makes links to the pupils' personal targets, wherever possible.
- Ensure that new governors are better informed and that all governors are more actively involved in monitoring the work of the school, with a clear focus on pupils' achievement and standards.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

**3**

The inspection focused on the achievement of the more able pupils in English because national data for the performance of Year 6 pupils in 2009 indicated that they did significantly less well than their peers nationally. However, inspection evidence showed that this underachievement was specific to that group of pupils. Lesson observations showed that more able pupils generally do just as well as their classmates, although

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there were some instances in which these pupils were not always challenged enough. Where this occurred, it was due to the teachers' lack of familiarity with the specific needs of these pupils or lack of clarity in the learning objective set. All pupils are well integrated into the school 'family' regardless of ethnicity, and different groups generally make similar progress.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn well and make good progress. Some of these pupils have difficulty in concentrating, others have limited cognitive skills, yet in all instances observed these barriers to learning were successfully countered through good quality individual support. Skilled teaching assistants play a key role and ensure the good inclusion of these pupils in lessons.

Since only 55% of the pupils who completed the inspection questionnaire felt that behaviour is good, the inspector looked very closely at pupils' conduct. Discussions with pupils revealed that their concerns generally relate to a very small minority, all of whom have clearly identified behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The behaviour of these, and all pupils, is monitored very carefully and all incidents are quickly and thoroughly dealt with. One pupil, appreciated the way in which the head dealt with incidents and commented, 'She really understands when she is sorting things out and has helped me to improve.' There are many ways in which pupils develop skills as young citizens and contribute to the day-to-day life of the school, including initiatives designed to promote good behaviour. These include 'buddy groups', pupils undertaking responsibility as play leaders and, most recently, 'peer mediators' who are trained to help others resolve friendship problems. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next phase of their education. A clear moral code permeates the daily life of the school and pupils' social development is good.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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>

<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.

<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 extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>3</b>
	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Teaching has a number of strengths, including good relationships between teachers and their pupils and well established routines which help teachers to manage and organise their pupils. While all teachers display many good technical skills, the impact of teaching on pupils' learning is not always as good as it should be. This is because the targets set for pupils to achieve in lessons are not clear enough. In other respects, teachers use assessment well to identify those pupils who need extra help to tackle specific difficulties in their learning, thus rapidly accelerating the progress made by these pupils. The quality of guidance provided for pupils through teachers' marking of their work is not always effective in securing learning. Work in pupils' books showed that systems for marking are inconsistently applied and the comments made by teachers do not always result in improvements being made. The major strengths of the curriculum are in provision for pupils' personal and social development and the clear focus on the development of skills in subjects such as art, geography, history, music and physical education. It is enriched through the teaching of French, and a good range of sporting activities, including those organised through the local sports partnership. Cross-curricular themes effectively capture pupils' imagination and provide many enjoyable challenges for pupils. For example, skills in literacy were very effectively developed in a Year 4/5 lesson about Ancient Egypt. This provided opportunities for thoughtful debate as pupils explored the reasons behind the actions of a tomb-robber. One group made good use of information and communication technology (ICT) when recording video footage of their interview with the robber. The good provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils permeates all aspects of school life. The needs of individuals are well known, and pupils feel valued members of the school 'family'. There are very clear, well established, arrangements to induct pupils into school and to ensure a smooth transition as they move on to the next phase of their education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b> Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	<b>3</b>
	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>

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<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>
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## How effective are leadership and management?

Almost all of the pupils surveyed felt that the headteacher and senior staff are doing a good job. This reflects the pupils' appreciation that this is a very inclusive school in which discrimination has no place and which gives them a sense of belonging. The direction provided in embedding ambition and driving improvement stems largely from the headteacher, ably supported by her deputy. Governors are supportive, but are yet to develop the skills needed for them to be truly independent in holding the school to account. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in improving the leadership and management skills of teachers. The impact of their actions is seen in pupils' satisfactory learning and progress.

All of the parents who returned the inspection questionnaires felt that the school is good at ensuring their children are safe. Inspection evidence fully supports this view. Safeguarding procedures have a high profile and are rigorously applied. A further strength of leadership and management is the range of effective partnerships with parents and external professional agencies, such as educational welfare and social services, which help the school to meet pupils' specific needs. Good links with the local Extended School Consortium have resulted in an increase in the variety of activities available for pupils, including counselling sessions for vulnerable pupils and opportunities for parents to access support services and training opportunities.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school knows its own community very well and is developing links with other schools, including one in Kenya in order to help broaden pupils' horizons. The school has a clear policy for the promotion of community cohesion but is yet to formally evaluate its impact.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>



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<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>
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## Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision has improved since the last inspection because of the effective actions of leadership and good support from the local authority. This is now resulting in improved attainment when children transfer to Year 1, and in 2009 this was above what is normally expected at this age. Children show a keen interest in all aspects of their learning. This is because the staff team has a good understanding of the needs of young children and provides them with a wide range of exciting opportunities for learning. For example, during the inspection, activities based on a pirate theme captured children's imagination as they made treasure maps, looked for buried treasure and sailed their pirate ship. Assessment procedures are good, and the information gathered is used well to ensure that children make rapid progress. There is a good balance between learning directed by adults and opportunities for children to choose their own activities. However, opportunities to develop children's language skills are sometimes missed when adults, keen to involve children in discussions, readily accept their responses while overlooking poor speech patterns and incorrect grammar or sentence structure.

*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

The rate of response was much lower than is normal for a school of this size. Only six parents expressed negative views and, of these, the large majority came from three parents. The one area of common concern, shared by almost all parents with negative views is the way in which the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspection findings do not support this view, nor is it supported by the pupils interviewed who said that adults deal quickly with any instances that occur.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bedmond Village Primary & Nursery 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 24 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 117 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	63	9	38	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	15	63	9	38	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	54	10	42	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	50	10	42	2	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	50	10	42	2	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	50	12	50	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	11	46	13	54	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)	10	45	8	36	2	9	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	58	10	42	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	48	8	35	3	13	1	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	38	12	50	1	4	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	15	63	5	21	3	13	1	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	15	63	8	33	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.**



Wednesday 3 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bedmond Village Primary & Nursery School, Hertfordshire, WD5 0RD

Thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when I visited your school. I think that your school provides you with a satisfactory education. This means that there are a lot of things that the school is doing right and some things that need to be improved. I know that all the adults who help to run your school want it to be a good school. For this to happen, you need to make better progress in your work.

Here are some of the things I liked best about your school.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start.

I was impressed by your good manners and behaviour.

You feel safe because the staff take good care of you.

You know a lot about how to keep healthy.

You do a lot to help with the day-to-day running of your school.

Your teachers plan some really exciting things for you to do.

To help you to make better progress in your work, I have asked your teachers to make sure that you completely understand what they want you to learn in lessons and what successful work will look like. Some of you cannot remember your individual targets, particularly in mathematics. This is often because they are too complicated. So I would like your teachers to make it easier for you to know how well you are getting on in achieving them. I would also like your teachers to make sure that when they mark your work, they always think about your targets.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Thompson

Lead inspector

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