

Bobbing Village School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118333
Local Authority	Kent
Inspection number	339195
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2010
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Denis Batson
Headteacher	Katrina Ware
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors spent around half their time looking at pupils' learning, visiting 13 lessons taught by 10 different staff. They also held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, records of their progress, lesson planning, playtime activities and the school's self-evaluation documents, including records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Inspection questionnaires were received from pupils, staff and from 70 parents and carers.

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

- how well pupils make progress through the school, particularly in Years 3 to 6 and in science
- the school's success in raising standards in mathematics and science
- the consistency and impact of the teaching, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and how well staff use assessment to plan work for pupils at the right level
- the effectiveness of school leaders, including senior leaders, middle managers and governors, in promoting improved progress by pupils
- the extent to which governors actively promote community cohesion.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school, which has grown considerably in recent years. The pupils are predominantly White British and almost all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is low in relation to most schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Of these, the majority have moderate learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social development needs. Most children join the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class. The school has been in formal federation with Iwade County Primary School since September 2007. Each school is run on a day-to-day basis by a head of school, reporting to the shared executive headteacher. One governing body manages the affairs of both schools. The shared breakfast and after-school clubs are held at Iwade School, but are used by only a small number of parents from Bobbing Village School.

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

Bobbing Village School provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils and serves its community well. Parents value the positive ethos and the strong sense of community. They recognise that the school is very committed to the well-being and personal development of its pupils. Consequently, pupils greatly enjoy school, attend often and feel very safe. Pupils are enthusiastic, with good social skills, have very positive attitudes to learning, work diligently and behave well. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, supported by their awareness of proper diet and good opportunities for physical exercise.

Consistently good teaching in Reception enables children to reach levels beyond those expected for their age. Good progress is effectively sustained in Years 1 and 2, so that standards are consistently above average at the end of Year 2. In Years 3 to 6, while average and lower-attaining pupils make at least satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress, there is not enough awareness of the needs of the more able pupils. As a result, they do not fully reach their potential, particularly in science. This has a significant impact on attainment at the end of Year 6, which is broadly average overall. However, the trend of pupils' performance in English and mathematics has been much stronger than in science. The good curriculum enables pupils to build independent learning skills as well as securing sound basic skills in literacy and numeracy.

Lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress. Additional opportunities, particularly through the specialist teaching of French and physical education and in the extra-curricular provision, enrich pupils' life experience well and contribute strongly to good personal development.

Teachers use some aspects of assessment well to check learning and to plan lessons. The marking of written work is thorough, providing guidance as to how pupils could improve. However, while data are analysed thoroughly, school leaders do not take remedial action quickly enough when they discover that progress has been insufficient. Individual targets for improvement are not evident in pupils' written work in Years 3 to 6 and, in consequence, have yet to impact on progress.

While senior leaders provide clear direction for the school in many respects and accurately identify its areas for development, pupils do not always meet their yearly targets or make enough use made of challenging individual targets to achieve greater consistency in learning and progress. The engagement with partner institutions, within the federation and with specialist secondary schools, is a strength. However, the weaker aspects of community cohesion mean that pupils have few opportunities to learn about the diversity of life in modern Britain. The school's success in dealing with all issues

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raised at the last inspection, the strength of the reconstituted leadership team and the consistency of pupils' progress in most respects in the school indicate that the capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils, particularly the more able, make more rapid and consistent progress in Years 3 to 6, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in each year, especially in science
 - ensuring that teachers are more accountable for the progress pupils make
 - involving pupils in devising challenging individual targets for learning and in monitoring their own learning and progress.
 - Develop existing good practice in relation to community cohesion, so that pupils have a greater awareness both of global cultures and of the cultural diversity that typifies contemporary Britain.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Although standards by the end of Year 6 have strengthened since the last inspection, they are less consistent than in Year 2, particularly in science. Overall, they are broadly average. Progress in reading is good across the school. Although, over time, not enough has been expected of more able pupils ' and to some extent inconsistent challenge remains evident in pupils' recorded work ' there were signs of particularly good practice in some lessons. In a successful Year 4 mathematics lesson on analogue time, more able pupils responded enthusiastically to a challenging task, where they constructed a complex timetable, based on information in a word problem. Effective questioning, a brisk pace and strict time limits motivated pupils well. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils of all abilities responded well to a range of challenging tasks for each group. Across the school, the progress of pupils with additional learning needs is good in most years, reflecting the effective extra support provided. The impact of all additional support is regularly evaluated to ensure that it remains effective.

The school's positive ethos leads to a strong sense of inclusiveness, commitment to the community and consideration for others. Pupils feel valued as individuals and this greatly increases their sense of self-worth. The school council provides a good forum for pupils' views. This supports the development of good social and leadership skills which, together with their satisfactory development of literacy and numeracy skills, prepares pupils soundly for later life. Pupils feel that they get good guidance on how to keep themselves safe and that they are listened to. As a result, they have confidence in the adults around them.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Staff work closely as a team and plan collaboratively, drawing upon shared good practice. Teachers' effective management of pupils' behaviour in class underpins a positive environment for learning. Teachers promote opportunities for pupils to work independently, so that pupils develop skills in organising and recording their work. Teaching assistants are well deployed to support learners, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, in spite of the underlying potential of the teaching, pupils in Years 3 to 6, over time, make inconsistent progress, largely because more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Assessment information is not always well used to ensure that these pupils make the necessary progress. A key exception is the strength of the specialist teaching in physical education and the capacity of the teacher to introduce additional challenges as one objective is achieved, so enabling the pupil quickly to move his or her performance to a higher level.

The curriculum has been extensively reviewed. It is strongly focused on developing key skills in literacy and numeracy, with well-developed cross-curricular links. Alongside discrete subject teaching, a range of creative themes, based on core texts or aspects of history or geography, contribute well to thinking and research skills and successfully motivate pupils. Specialist teaching in French and physical education is strongly impacting upon attainment. Small group interventions, such as the one-to-one input in mathematics for younger pupils, are precisely targeted on pupils' specific needs. Good

¹ 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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personal, social, health and citizenship education, a wide range of visits and visitors and extensive sporting and extra-curricular opportunities all impact strongly on pupils' good personal development.

Staff have a good awareness of pupils' needs and the school is highly committed to supporting pupils and families. It works well with outside agencies to support the health, social or behavioural needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. There are effective strategies to sustain pupils' good attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The executive headteacher has been very successful in setting a clear direction for the school. Firm action has enabled the school to restructure and strengthen the leadership teams. Leaders have a shared commitment to continued improvement, and, in particular, to pupils' personal development. Links with parents have been significantly strengthened through the parent council. Priorities identified at the last inspection have been successfully tackled, leading to improved standards in mathematics. Effective systems ensure that the school runs smoothly. However, while progress meetings track pupils' learning, these do not yet assign sufficient accountability to staff. Although teaching and learning are monitored regularly, this has not, so far, sufficiently addressed weaknesses in science or inconsistent progress in Years 3 to 6.

The governing body is very supportive. Although not so well informed on pupils' performance, governors understand the school's strengths and are closely involved in shaping its future direction. They ensure that statutory requirements are met, including the good procedures for safeguarding pupils. Roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding are clearly defined. Potential discrimination is tackled resolutely. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily through evaluation of the performance of groups. At present, however, the support for more able pupils does not match the good provision for pupils with additional learning needs. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily through well-developed involvement with the local community and a few emerging, though not yet dynamic, global links, mainly with France and South Africa. However, pupils have fewer planned opportunities to engage with the diverse cultures typical of contemporary Britain.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children generally enter the Reception Year with skills and knowledge that are around the levels expected for their age. They settle quickly because of good induction arrangements and sensitive adult support. Children are very well cared for and have close and creative relationships with staff. They feel safe and secure, behave very well, move confidently between activities and show great interest in visitors and events. By the end of Reception, attainment is above average, indicating consistently good progress. Progress is particularly good in personal and social development, in aspects of language and communication and in mathematical development. Though consistently good teaching has a significant impact on children's basic skills, the proportion of children attaining at the highest levels is lower than is found nationally. As a result, the school aims to improve provision and outcomes for the most able. Children access the well-resourced outdoor learning opportunities frequently and these generally complement indoor learning well. Links across the curriculum are effectively developed, as when the story of The Three Bears provided well-integrated opportunities for writing, role-play and mathematics. Leadership and management are good, with rigorous monitoring and effective sharing of best practice with the partner school. The observation and assessment of children's learning is rigorous and data is used well to identify progress. This effectively supports detailed planning and the good pace of learning.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are very pleased with the school. One parent said, 'Bobbing is a fantastic school and we would not want our child to be anywhere else.' Typically, parents and carers appreciate the close relationships and sense of community and the good progress they feel their children make. A few parents raised issues specific to their children. Other concerns related to perceived variations in the quality of teaching, issues around health and safety and a perception that more able pupils receive more attention than average and lower-attaining pupils. The inspection team considered all points carefully. Procedural aspects of health and safety are well managed, although day-to-day practice may vary. School data indicate that average and lower-attaining pupils are making better progress than the more able. The inspection team feels that inconsistency of provision, including teaching, for more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 is a key weakness. Overall, however, the consensus suggests that this is a very caring school where pupils are well supported. Inspection findings largely endorse parents' and carers' positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bobbing Village 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 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 204 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	49	70	19	27	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	79	13	19	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	43	61	26	37	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	57	27	39	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	45	64	23	33	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	57	25	36	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	53	32	46	1	1	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)	43	61	19	27	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	50	30	43	2	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	53	24	34	2	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	40	32	46	5	7	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	44	63	21	30	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	74	16	23	1	1	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.



30 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bobbing Village School, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8PL

On behalf of the inspection team, thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and spending time in your lessons. We found that your school is satisfactory overall. It also has some important strengths.

Here are our main findings.

- You behave well, are courteous and friendly and work hard.
- Standards are average in Year 6 but have risen significantly. However, while standards in reading are high in all years, you do not do so well in science.
- Teachers work hard and generally support you well in your learning, although you need to make faster progress in Years 3 to 6.
- Children in Reception make good progress in all areas of their learning.
- The school makes sure that you are cared for well.
- You conduct yourselves very safely and have a good understanding of how important it is to eat healthily.
- The curriculum is good. You go on a wide range of visits and take part in lots of clubs which support your personal development well.
- Those of you who find learning difficult get extra help, so that you can make good progress.
- The school leaders are taking the school forward in important ways.

We are asking the school to make the following changes so that you do even better.

- Ensure that teachers have higher expectations and provide more demanding work for those pupils in Years 3 to 6 who find learning easy. Also, set challenging targets which pupils really understand.
- Ensure that pupils have more opportunities to learn about the cultures and customs of other countries, and about the wide range of people who live in the United Kingdom.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan

Lead inspector

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