

Bryn Offa C of E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123528
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	340359
Inspection dates	14–15 September 2009
Reporting inspector	Carolyn Carnaghan

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	115
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev C. Penn
Headteacher	Ms Diana West
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2007
School address	Rockwell Lane Pant Oswestry Shropshire SY10 9QR
Telephone number	01691 830621
Fax number	01691 839232
Email address	head@brynoffa.shropshire.sch.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited ten lessons, and held meetings with a governor, the assistant headteacher and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including 45 parental, 58 pupil and 6 teacher questionnaires.

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

- whether the school's actions have started to raise pupils' attainment in writing
- how well teaching promotes high achievement, particularly for more able pupils
- the effectiveness of the use of assessment
- how well children are doing in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Information about the school

Bryn Offa is a smaller than the average primary school. Almost all pupils are White British and virtually all speak English as their first language. There are fewer than average pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school experiences a higher than expected turnover of pupils. The school has received the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark within the last year. There is an onsite pre-school, Pant Pendas, that provides before school, after school and holiday care. The school has an acting headteacher who was not present during the inspection.

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

Bryn Offa Church of England Primary school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Pupils are happy at school and feel safe and secure; they develop very good relationships with their teachers and their peers. The school promotes a caring, kind ethos, where pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for each other, particularly those who are younger. Pupils' attendance is above average, and their behaviour is good.

Pupils make satisfactory progress and leave school with average levels of attainment. Pupils make the best progress in Key Stage 1, across all subjects and attainment is above average. In Key Stage 2, progress is slower, particularly in writing and the school acknowledges that this must be tackled urgently. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress.

Teaching is satisfactory with some lessons offering exciting and challenging activities. Where teaching is weaker, there is insufficient use of assessment, poor planning that does not take into account the range of ability in the class and poor pace. Pupils make the best progress where they work independently or in small groups and where the teacher brings some fun into the work.

Pupils are very keen to take on responsibilities, such as those who buddy and mentor others. They run a tuck shop and some belong to the school council. They are keen to raise money for charities and to take part in sports and teams.

The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory and the senior leadership team, of acting headteacher and assistant head, have identified key areas for development. The monitoring of teaching has not been rigorous enough and this leads to inconsistencies. The school recognises this. It also recognises the need for more accurate and better-used pupil assessment and for far more rigorous planning of lessons. Governance is satisfactory, but governors' checks on the school are not always rigorous enough.

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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- By April 2010, raise the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring:
 - lesson planning takes into account different ability levels of pupils
 - assessment informs the planning and delivery of lessons to provide support and challenge for all pupils.
- Raise attainment in writing, particularly in Years 5 and 6, by seeking more opportunities across the curriculum to promote writing.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Lessons observed during the inspection showed that pupils enjoy their work. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons when the tasks set are well planned to match their needs. This is not always the case, however. Pupils' learning and progress in Key Stage 2, from their starting points in mathematics, science and reading, are satisfactory and by the end of Year 6, national tests show that their attainment is broadly average. This has been the case over the last three years. However, achievement in writing has not been satisfactory in the past, although there has been a significant improvement this year. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make better progress in all subjects and they reach attainment levels that are above those seen nationally. More able pupils across the school do not progress as well as those nationally. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who join the school at other than the usual times, make satisfactory progress from their starting points.

Pupils say that they feel safe at school and this helps them build their confidence. There is very little bullying and where this occurs it is dealt with swiftly and carefully. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility for activities, such as the school council and the tuck shop. They have visited local businesses and council officers to see how the world of work does things. This helps them to gain suitable experiences that will help prepare them for future life. Pupils' behaviour is generally good and they expect to help and guide younger members of the school. Pupils see the 'Bryn Offa Buddies'- the 'BOBS'- as a real plus for those feeling a little unsure and becoming a 'BOB' is an honour, clearly helping to build maturity and confidence.

There are a great many opportunities for sport and pupils enjoy the chance to belong to teams and clubs. They like their healthy school lunches. Pupils appreciate their local community and share contacts with schools in other countries, such as Egypt. This is part of the way pupils develop social, moral, cultural and spiritual values, which are generally good. The local churches are regularly visited at times of celebration and festivals, but there is also a keen ethos of caring and supporting

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others through your own actions. Pupils' attendance is better than average, showing how much they enjoy coming to Bryn Offa.

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	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	3
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?

Where teaching is good it is lively and involving and ensures pupils of all ability levels are stretched. A few lessons are too teacher dominated, lacking pace and challenge, particularly for higher attainers. In satisfactory lessons, teachers do not always fully use what they know about pupils' attainment and ability in their planning. There is sometimes too little reference to how pupils can do better and insufficient opportunity for able pupils to really stretch themselves. Marking of books is inconsistent, though the best becomes an open conversation with individual pupils and ensures they understand how they can achieve more.

Where teachers have high expectations, such as in a modern foreign languages lesson seen, pupils are confident and willing to take risks, enjoying the fun that can ensue. In a history lesson they used role-play to find out what it might really have been like for the young evacuees who came to Shropshire. Where pupils in a mathematics lesson were given the chance to work fully at a level well suited to their ability, progress was good. However, where teachers dominate the lesson for too long, using up too much time taking registers and settling pupils, then setting tasks that fail to stretch pupils successfully, progress is slower. Generally pupils at Bryn Offa work well independently, they are happy to tackle tasks that are not easy. Pupils

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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who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants and this allows them to keep up with the lesson and to contribute to it.

Assessment is not always used enough as an effective tool for raising attainment and it does not consistently form the backbone of lesson planning. Teachers do carry out regular assessments and keep parents in touch with how their children are doing, but these assessments are not used sufficiently to improve learning.

The curriculum is good and provides for a rich and varied range of activities. Information and communication technology is used and enjoyed by pupils in many subjects. All pupils learn French and take part in sport. Dance and drama are taught mainly through enrichment sessions and art is the focus for a week's activities. There are numerous visits to outdoor centres, to the church and there are many visitors who come to share their experiences, such as a nurse and a mobile museum curator. Opportunities for pupils to write about such experiences are not effectively developed.

Pupils receive very good care from their teachers but they are not supported fully through all their lessons. More vulnerable pupils are well cared for and supported, however, and their teaching assistants work very keenly to ensure this. Arrangements for arriving and leaving school are well handled and pupils speak confidently about where they will go on to when they leave school. The school provides satisfactory safeguarding policies and procedures for all pupils and ensures all staff and pupils understand who to turn to when problems arise.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Leadership and management of Bryn Offa are satisfactory but are currently in a state of flux, with an acting headteacher just in post and a new one to be appointed. The leadership team suitably ensures that pupils have equal opportunities to develop their key skills. They have begun to have some success, as achievement has started to rise in important areas, such as writing. However, the school has not fully delivered improvements in progress and attainment for all pupils and the ambitions of the leadership and management team have not all been successfully realised. For example, the identification of pupils who are gifted and talented has not led to a rise

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in the attainment of the most able.

The acting headteacher and her assistant headteacher are very clear about the necessary improvements that must be made in the key area of teaching and these are becoming embedded. The temporary team have rightly diagnosed where the school needs to do better, particularly in writing and there are good systems to enable this to continue. The school is aware that the monitoring of teaching has not been extensive enough to raise levels of learning and plans to improve this.

Governors meet all their responsibilities and work hard to make sure that pupils and staff are safe in school. The governing body has good understanding of how the school is run. They rarely visit lessons, however, so they are not sufficiently aware of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. This limits their opportunities to fully hold the school to account. Their understanding of the curriculum is satisfactory and they are undeniably supportive of both school and pupils.

The school promotes community cohesion locally by engaging with village organisations and local churches and internationally through links with a school in Egypt. The school has not formed links with other schools elsewhere in the country so that pupils can develop a better understanding of life in a different kind of community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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	3
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's progress is satisfactory but their attainment on entry to Year 1 is below that found nationally because of their starting points. The school and the local authority have provided recent extensive support for the Early Years Foundation Stage and, with the teacher, have helped ensure that assessments are carried out

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more accurately than they were previously. The class is now solely for Reception children and this appears to be beginning to pay off. Reception class children work in a large airy room with plenty of outside space to play. They have varied opportunities to explore and try out activities, such as designing and making pizzas, building a 'pizzeria' and sharing the results of their labours with Class 1.

Children enjoy well thought through choices in their work and these are developed through very good understanding of each child's individual needs. Assessments are carefully carried out through observations and careful questioning of the child. Children are encouraged to explore language, vocabulary, sounds, movement and their own independence and creativity.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Most parents who responded to the questionnaires were highly positive about the school. Parents are particularly appreciative of their child's experiences at school with many also saying their child feels safe here and enjoys school. Parents are pleased with the teaching and how the school promotes a healthy life style. Parents also feel strongly that their children are being well prepared for their future lives.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bryn Offa C of E 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 12 statements about the school.

The Inspection team received 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 106 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	30	57	20	38	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	57	19	36	2	4	1	2
The school informs me about my child’s progress	21	40	29	55	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	47	22	42	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	28	53	23	43	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	24	45	25	47	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	51	23	43	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)	27	51	21	40	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	25	47	24	45	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	32	30	57	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	38	27	51	0	0	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	21	40	27	51	3	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	35	66	16	30	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 all 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

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 pupils' 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.



16 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bryn Offa Church of England Primary School

Thank you very much for making me and my team feel so welcome when we came to inspect your school. We really enjoyed meeting you. After spending two days in your school, meeting you, watching your lessons and talking to your teachers, I have judged that your school is satisfactory.

The things I particularly liked about your school were:

- you really enjoy school and you feel safe there
- you behave well and care for each other
- you are good at working together and have fun at school
- your attendance is good
- your school has a good curriculum with plenty of visitors, sports clubs and trips.

So that your school can improve in the future, I have asked senior leaders to focus on two areas.

- By April 2010, improve teaching and learning by making sure:
 - lessons are better planned so that all of you can make more progress
 - your work is regularly marked and assessed so you know how well you are doing and so your teachers can help you more in lessons
- Help you improve your writing, particularly in Years 5 and 6, by making sure you have the chance to do more of it, in all lessons

Yours sincerely,

Carolyn Carnaghan

Lead Inspector

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