

Great Binfields Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132212
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	341314
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2009
Reporting inspector	David Collard

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	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Cullinane
Headteacher	Simon Cushing
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons or parts of lessons and held meetings with staff, governors and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including policies, the school improvement plan, assessment data and external reports. The school's safeguarding procedures were checked and evaluated.

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

- whether the outcomes for pupils in English and mathematics have continued to improve and how well the school has addressed the relative weaknesses in writing and mathematics
- whether the new curriculum planning is helping raise both the personal and academic outcomes for pupils
- how well the leadership at all levels is driving whole-school strategies and improving the school's overall effectiveness.

Information about the school

This smaller-than-average primary school serves its local area although there are increasing numbers of pupils who come from further afield. The school has a visually impaired unit which can educate a total of 10 pupils. At the time of the inspection there were five pupils in this unit, almost all of whom have a wide range of other complex learning needs in addition to their visual impairment. Much of their time is spent in mainstream classes. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational need is above the national average. Almost all pupils come from a White British background. The school gained a Healthy Schools award in 2008. Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class.

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

One parent, among a number of others, rightly summed up this good school: " the staff are full of enthusiasm and are focused on ensuring my child is able to develop as an individual.' This stated aim is at the heart of the school's vision. Teaching is good overall and at times exemplary. Consequently, pupils achieve well through the school and attainment by the end of Year 6 is above average. The care guidance and support given to pupils is outstanding and helps them to thrive whilst at school.

The ambitious headteacher, with the strong and effective support of other leaders and the parent body, has continued to improve provision since the last inspection. There has been a good impact on the outcomes for pupils which can also be seen in the improved national test results in 2009. Through the good and realistic self-evaluation, the school has focused on balancing both academic and personal achievement so that almost all pupils, as one parent rightly said, " have a positive approach to learning, are developing good social skills and are being challenged and prepared for their future life.' This, along with clear plans for the future, points to a school with a good capacity to continue to improve.

Pupils are fun to be with. They have high levels of self-esteem and are not afraid to give their opinions or take responsibility. They show initiative such as when planning activities through the Enterprise council. They provide suggestions for improving the school environment, take rights and responsibility seriously, and class budgets allow them to learn about financial management. Behaviour in and around the school is good and when, on the odd occasion, identified pupils with behavioural issues are not so well behaved, there are well-established routines which quickly deflect any potential issues. This ensures lessons, playtimes and other activities run smoothly. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure and know that adults will help and support them: as one very maturely said, 'We don't make a drama out of a crisis here!'

Children make a satisfactory start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage; they settle in well and are happy to be at school. Enthusiastic teaching for these younger children means that their achievement is satisfactory. Leaders recognise that the quality of learning could be further enriched by developing more opportunities for learning through play, especially allowing children to deepen their curiosity and by making both the inside and outside areas a more active, exciting and challenging, learning environment.

In the school as a whole, a high focus has been placed on improving writing and on eliminating some relative fluctuations in mathematics. While not yet fully successful, there are tangible signs that this has been effective such as in the most recent national

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test results where 90% of pupils achieved the age expected level in both English and mathematics.

Pupils in the visually impaired unit are supported well and are provided with the right resources to enable them to play an active role in school life. Pupils' many complex needs mean that not all make the same academic progress as their peers even though they are being prepared well for their future life. While assessment information is used well through the school, progress data are not broken down well enough into small steps for this particular group. Consequently the school cannot demonstrate how successful support has been for these pupils over the longer term.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Enrich children's experiences through the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - developing their curiosity in an exciting and challenging learning environment
 - using play more effectively to support their progress in basic skills
 - balancing the use of the inside and outside provision so that both develop all the areas of learning effectively.
- Increase the progress for the visually impaired pupils by refining the planning and assessment into smaller steps of development that enable the school to gauge how successful the provision for these pupils has been.

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

There is a good balance between pupils' academic and personal outcomes. Around the school it is very evident that pupils enjoy their schooling and are enthusiastic learners. Pupils know what constitutes a healthy diet and lifestyle even though on occasions they succumb to some treats! At lunch, for example one visually impaired pupil enjoyed the yoghurt while another tucked into the nutritious roast explaining that he needed to eat all his vegetables. Pupils enjoy physical exercise and say they would like even more. Pupils become actively involved in their community both locally and further afield and encourage their parents to do the same. The Children's Fair is organised, financed and run by the Enterprise council whose influence is now being used to develop further events such as the production of the school calendar. Pupils are spiritually and culturally aware and can talk about other cultures and traditions showing respect, without stereotyping. Staff and pupils would agree that the school does not always 'sell itself' and this is something that is to be talked through with the school council to suggest how more national and international links can be made.

Pupils start school with attainment that is broadly in line with the skills expected for their age although there is a small number who have significantly less developed skills in social and communication development. Work in pupils' books, in lessons and in assessment data demonstrates the good academic progress that is made so that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and relative to their starting points, pupils are working at or above the levels that might be expected. Certainly by Year 6, analysis of recent test

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results shows that the majority have reached or exceeded the challenging targets set for them and the fluctuations in mathematics are less obvious. There are inevitable year group fluctuations due to the small numbers and the proportion of pupils who have statements of special educational need. For example, those in the present Years 5 and 6 are not likely to reach the same levels as those in previous years and the school has put in place stringent analysis and intervention to ensure they succeed to the best of their ability and make good overall progress. Evidence of this was seen in one lesson where high-level support was being given to a group to ensure that a mathematical concept about division from the previous day and with which they had struggled was fully understood.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

While teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding, a high proportion is good and in all lessons there are some individual elements which are particularly strong. It is this general consistency, combined with the excellent care, guidance and support of pupils that ensures pupils make good progress through each year. Careful planning ensures

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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that, as far as possible, teachers give real and relevant experiences to the pupils. For example, some good drawings of eyes have been linked to a science topic about the body. Comments around these have helped the class understand scientific vocabulary as well as have an appreciation about how people are different. Teachers are also encouraged to take risks in their planning and not be discouraged if they need to change the direction of the lesson or their approach to ensuring that pupils learn quickly. In discussions with pupils they very enthusiastically talked about how they 'raced the cars they had built' and about how their persuasive writing, an issue at the previous inspection, had been used to encourage 'World War 2 parents to evacuate their children to safer areas'.

Lessons generally move at a good pace and many different methods are used. At its best, teachers are also aware when enough is enough and move on quickly. It is when this understanding is not so strong that teaching is satisfactory and becomes less challenging. Work is aimed well for different abilities and books show how this has been consistently applied over time. Visually impaired pupils are supported very well by assistants with good levels of expertise. In individual plans their tiny steps in successful learning are not always fully identified, such as how practice might be needed to develop a particular social skill. More generally, those with other special educational needs or lower ability are challenged well, as are higher attainers. Good use of assessment information drives this, as does the good targeting arrangements for individual pupils. All this ensures pupils understand how to improve. Practice is, however, stronger in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science than in other subjects.

The lively curriculum has been developed to ensure that pupils want to learn and have an individual desire to find out more. This is evident in the high-quality work that is done at home and by the independent research that pupils undertake. A contributory factor includes the excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Regular use is made of information and communication technology to support research work, although it is not always used as a matter of course in the classroom.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

'Our headteacher is fun' is how one pupil put it, but this does not detract from the clear vision for the school or the high expectations that are set. Everybody is expected to play

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their part in building a school where pupils achieve what they are capable of ' a vision that is shared and understood by all those involved, including the parents. The emphasis on promoting equality of opportunity for the pupils is very impressive so that different groups of pupils generally make the same levels of progress.

The senior team brings complementary skills that enable innovative ideas to be developed and analysed for their success, and changes to be made where they are needed. Results in national tests are one measure of the success. Leaders know that more refinement is needed to ensure that all leaders take an active role in the monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure the highest levels of attainment and achievement for all pupils. As yet, monitoring of lessons is primarily left to the most senior managers. The school's improvement plan identifies that further work is needed to evaluate the quality of community cohesion to very best effect. Nonetheless, pupils' understanding of local, national and international diversity is good.

The strongly led governing body brings a healthy realism to counter the many enthusiastic ideas and governors take their statutory responsibilities very seriously. As a result, safeguarding procedures are very highly effective and all relevant policies are in place. This is exemplified by the thoroughness of the review and ratification procedures. A number of governors, including the Chair, are very experienced and are able to provide the good support needed to challenge decisions made by the headteacher and senior leaders. However, this is not universal and further training is under way to ensure everybody, particularly those new to the role, plays their part in holding the school to account and in determining the strategic direction for the future.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	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	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

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Early Years Foundation Stage

As this was early in the school year not all children had started their full-time education. Through good induction procedures, adults have built strong relationships with both the children and their families. When working individually, the children share their ideas and resources and are fully encouraged to help each other. When in a class group this is not as evident as a number of the children are too eager to be heard and do not wait for others. This is something that the staff are actively and effectively working to resolve. The satisfactory teaching is aimed at balancing play and the more formal learning of skills. In general this works and is also clearly identified in the thorough planning. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to learn new skills during the activities they choose for themselves. For example, a group of children enthusiastically played with a bag of dinosaur objects following the building of a dinosaur world. However, adults did not extend children's learning still further by spontaneously developing early counting, writing or reading skills. Moreover, there was no use of the outside area, which would have provided a further play dimension to the child-initiated activities. More positively, interaction between staff and the class is good and questioning techniques make children think. Leadership is good, which reflects the recent improvements in provision. Strengths and weaknesses are clearly identified and a wide range of effective training is being offered to develop the expertise of all, so that children can be challenged to learn really quickly. Assessment records show that children are suitably prepared by the start of Year 1, as standards by the end of their Reception Year are average.

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	2

Views of parents and carers

Nearly half the parents responded to the questionnaire. Overwhelmingly, parents feel that they are happy with their child's experience of school and in most other areas there are relatively few concerns. Nobody strongly disagreed with the statements. One or two minor concerns centre on how well the school deals with unacceptable behaviour and about communication with parents or how well they are kept informed. The inspection accepts that there are odd occasions of unacceptable behaviour but these are dealt with very well by the school. Lines of communication are open. Reception staff deal with

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problems effectively and staff are available to deal with individual concerns. Regular reports, newsletters and the up-to-date website are available to support communication, as are parents' evenings.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Great Binfields 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 inspection team received 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 182 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	68	80	17	20	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	64	75	21	25	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	48	40	47	2	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	56	66	25	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	62	73	22	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	58	31	36	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	61	72	24	28	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)	56	66	21	25	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	55	65	29	25	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	48	31	36	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	42	49	34	40	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	65	76	17	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	70	82	15	18	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">■ 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.



22 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Great Binfields Primary School, Basingstoke RG24 8AJ

Thank you for making us so welcome during our recent visit. We enjoyed joining you in lessons and hearing about all the things that you do. I am sure you will not be surprised to hear that we have said that yours is a good school and there were lots of reasons for this ' many of them you told us about. As I promised some of you, I have enclosed the main points of our report below.

- You told us how proud you were of your school and how much you enjoyed all the activities. Many of you said it was fun and we can see why. We have said that you are taught lots of really interesting lessons and this is why you are so keen to learn.
- You make good progress through the school and are reaching above-average standards by the time you leave. This good progress, combined with the many enterprising activities and the excellent range of other activities, means that you are well prepared for your future.
- Your teachers enjoy planning exciting lessons. That was clear by talking to you as well as the staff. Many of these activities mean that you go on and find out information for yourselves. You are given good challenges to do and so this helps all of you to make better progress.
- We have also said that you are looked after extremely well and feel safe and secure. We were also impressed with the way you are building up an understanding of how to live healthily. Keep it up!

We have suggested a couple of things that your school can do to make it even better:

- Make sure that the youngest children learn in as exciting a way as possible, especially having more challenging outside activities.
- Check carefully how well the visually impaired pupils are doing, so that they make as much progress as possible.

We know you will continue to work hard and suggest ways that the school can improve. This will all help your school become recognised as one of the best.

Yours sincerely

David Collard

Lead inspector

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