

Bickleigh Down Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113493
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	354504
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Stephen Lake

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	394
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Carlton
Headteacher	Christine Deykin
Date of previous school inspection	2 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 21 lessons, observing 15 teachers, and held meetings with governors, teaching and support staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the most recent school self-evaluation form, the school development plan, the governing body's minutes, the school's assessments of pupils' attainment and progress, the records held on vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and/ disabilities, school policies, and reports from the local authority and School Improvement Partner. Inspectors analysed questionnaires from pupils, staff and 218 parents.

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

- achievement in mathematics to determine if teaching is good enough
- achievement of pupils with special educational needs at both key stages to determine the impact of the improved provision
- the strategies for promoting and evaluating community cohesion to see their impact especially on pupils' cultural development
- the quality of outdoor provision and its impact on the curriculum for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a much larger than average school. It serves mainly the area around Woolwell but around 20 per cent of pupils come from nearby Plymouth. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. The large majority of pupils are of White British origin, with fewer pupils than that found in most schools coming from other ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average, but the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is broadly average. More pupils leave or join the school during their school career than is usually found nationally. The school is currently managed by the deputy headteacher and the substantive headteacher part-time in a co-headship arrangement until the new headteacher starts in September.

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

3

Main findings

Bickleigh Down C of E Primary is a good school. Pupils achieve well. Children in the Reception class get a good start to their education because of good teaching. Pupils build upon this good start well and make good progress to attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 6. Progress is particularly strong in English, which has been a school focus this year, but pupils make less progress in mathematics and their attainment is lower than in English and science. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the much improved provision and management in this area and the support of highly capable teaching assistants.

Pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy because of the good quality care, guidance and support that they receive. Pupils are developing into polite, mature and confident young people, well prepared for the future. They behave well and say how much they enjoy school. The school works very closely with parents to support their children's learning. Pupils make a good contribution to both the school and local community. Their spiritual, moral and social development is excellent. Pupils' cultural development, although good, is a comparative weakness.

The quality of teaching is good but some inconsistencies occur, especially in mathematics. Information about how well pupils are progressing is not used as consistently in mathematics as it is in English to plan work closely matched to the needs of all pupils, especially those who are lower attaining. In addition, marking does not always give pupils enough guidance on how they can improve their work. The move to a creative curriculum is stimulating pupils' interests, particularly boys, making them eager to learn. However, the lack of a suitable covered outdoor area in the Early Years Foundation Stage limits opportunities for children to access all elements of the curriculum indoors and outdoors in adverse weather conditions.

The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses as self-evaluation procedures are robust. All leaders and managers and governors share a clear ambition to improve the school and drive up attainment. Improved assessment procedures provide good quality information on the progress of pupils, but this information is not used well enough at a strategic level to monitor whole-school performance. Attainment and progress have improved after a period of lower attainment, especially in English and information and communication technology (ICT). Action has already started on most of the areas for development, and initiatives to improve the curriculum are effective in improving attainment in English.

Nevertheless, the effect of the imminent changes at senior leadership level means that the future pace of change and clarity of direction are less clear, and therefore the

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capacity for further improvement is satisfactory rather than good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress in mathematics to match that in English by September 2011 by:
 - ensuring that assessment information is analysed more consistently by all staff and the information is used to plan work that challenges pupils, especially the less able, to achieve their very best, and to provide information on whole-school performance
 - making sure that marking gives pupils clear guidance on what they need to do in order to improve their work
 - seeking ways to link work in mathematics more closely to other areas of the curriculum.
- As a matter of urgency, seek ways to improve the outdoor area available for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - ensuring that a suitably large covered area provides enough space for a full range of activities to be undertaken outdoors in all weathers
 - providing easy access to the area so that children can move freely and independently between indoor and outdoor activities.
- Make better provision for raising pupils' awareness of the rich variety of cultures to be found within Britain.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children start school with skills similar to those expected at this age. They make good progress in Reception and enter Year 1 with skills above those normally expected. Attainment and progress in Years 1 to 6 are improving, especially in English, as a result of improved teaching. Progress in mathematics is accelerating and a large majority of pupils in the current Year 6 have made outstanding progress in the last year, although their progress over time is slower than in other subjects. Pupils respond well to the excellent attention given to promoting positive attitudes to learning and developing the key skills needed to be active and eager learners. The school's '5Rs' ? Resilience, Risk taking, Relationships, Reflection and Resourcefulness ? are taken very seriously and foster good attitudes to learning. Pupils are attentive in lessons and respect each other's contributions. For example, in an English lesson where pupils were encouraged to adapt a story in the style of Rudyard Kipling, pupils listened carefully to the ideas of others and collaborated very effectively to develop new elements of the story. Pupils with additional needs or those who are vulnerable make good progress because learning programmes are tailored to meet their individual needs. Nevertheless, when teaching does not motivate pupils sufficiently, or when pupils are kept sitting on the carpet for too long, some pupils become distracted and this disrupts their learning.

Pupils say there is no bullying and they trust the adults to deal with any that might occur. Pupils are extremely knowledgeable about how to stay fit and healthy and many

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participate in the wide range of opportunities for sport in lessons and after-school clubs. Pupils' good cultural development is not quite as strong as other aspects of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. They have a strong understanding of local cultures and some in other countries but they do not have a secure enough understanding of the rich diversity of cultures to be found in Britain. Pupils undertake many roles in school, such as Peer Mentors, who help resolve playground problems, or membership of the active school council. They take an active interest in their local community, writing to local councillors about issues that interest them. These activities not only enable pupils to make a good contribution to the school and local community but also give them strong early citizenship skills. Together with their good literacy and ICT skills, this prepares them well for the next stage in their education.

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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Pupils learn well in this school because of good teaching and the stimulating curriculum that ensure many highly motivating experiences for pupils. The provision for ensuring pupils' personal development is very strong. In particular, the school's close links with

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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the local church make an outstanding contribution to their spiritual and moral development. The move to a creative curriculum is enabling pupils' English skills, especially writing, to be developed well through other subjects, although the use of mathematics across the curriculum is less well developed. New and effective assessment procedures are used well in English to match work closely to the needs of pupils and set them challenging targets, but this is less consistent in mathematics, which is a major reason that progress in English is stronger than that in mathematics.

Teachers prepare most lessons that stimulate pupils to learn. ICT is used well to support teaching. For example, in a lesson on shapes, good use was made of ICT/interactive whiteboards to demonstrate the way in which perimeters and areas of shapes could be calculated. Nevertheless, occasionally the text used on them is a little too small to be read easily by pupils and this limits the effectiveness of the technique. Learning is also slowed occasionally by over-long explanations and introductions to lessons. Questioning usually challenges pupils well and extends their learning while assessing what they already know. Marking in many classes gives pupils good guidance on how they can improve their work but this is inconsistent, especially in mathematics.

Pastoral care is very strong. Child protection procedures are detailed and well known to all staff. The school works very closely with parents to support their children's learning through information evenings and innovative systems to pass on relevant information, including through text messaging. Pupils deemed gifted and talented are identified early and are given suitably challenging learning targets. The additional one-to-one support for pupils who need help in developing their writing skills is very effective.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The high expectations of senior staff and the commitment to continual improvement are communicated well to all staff. The co-headteachers monitor the quality of teaching and learning well. Subject managers for mathematics have identified key areas that need addressing to improve progress. Equality of opportunity is promoted well and monitored carefully. The school is very good at ensuring vulnerable pupils or those with additional needs are fully included in all activities. The school is developing links with schools in other countries to extend pupils' cultural development and support community cohesion. The good work on the local aspects is having an increasing impact upon pupils' awareness of local culture; however, community cohesion is satisfactory rather than

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good because not enough is done to develop pupils' understanding of cultures represented in wider Britain.

The governing body is supportive and works closely with the two co-headteachers to improve the quality of teaching. Governors have a good understanding of safeguarding requirements, particularly related to vetting of staff and child protection, and health and safety issues identified are dealt with promptly. Parental views are sought and listened to. For example, changes have been made to the school meals menus to support pupils' awareness of how to stay healthy, following detailed consultation with parents.

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	2
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	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children receive a good start to their education. Close and positive relationships with pre-school groups and parents mean that children settle quickly and happily. Their progress in personal and social development is particularly good. Children display positive attitudes and learn to relate well to others. The good partnership between children and adults and a focus on praise ensure excellent behaviour. High quality care helps children to feel secure and confident and welfare needs are met well.

Children make good progress. They start school with levels of skill in line with those normally found at this age and enter Year 1 well prepared for learning with skills that are above expectations. A welcoming and stimulating environment is provided for children. All areas of learning are covered appropriately. Adults ensure a good balance between teacher-directed activities and independent choice that helps children develop as confident learners. Good quality systems for checking on children's progress are used

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effectively to plan work that challenges children to achieve well. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified at an early stage, enabling good quality support to be provided. The outdoor area provides good opportunities for children to engage in physical activity. However, the lack of a suitable covered area limits the opportunities for children to access all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum in all weathers. Access to the area is also limited a little, due to the position of an access door. Leaders and managers have a satisfactory overview of provision, but information on children's progress is not used well enough to give an overview of how the whole cohort or different groups of children are achieving.

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	3

Views of parents and carers

The vast majority of parents are happy with their child's experience at school. Many written comments praised the school and typical of the comments received were, 'I thoroughly recommend this school, teachers are very helpful in every way' and 'It is a very well run school where my children are looked after and the teaching staff are extremely caring.' Inspectors agree with the positive comments of parents.

A small minority of parents were concerned that behaviour is not dealt with effectively. A smaller number were concerned that parents' suggestions and concerns are not taken into account. Inspectors found that effective behaviour management ensures that pupils' behaviour, though not perfect, is usually good. Inspectors also noted a good range of opportunities to obtain parents' views but are unable to comment upon the action taken on individual suggestions made.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bickleigh Down C of E Primary 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 218 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 394 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	97	44	113	52	8	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	109	50	105	48	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	59	27	145	67	13	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	60	28	141	65	15	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	81	37	126	58	6	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	63	29	133	61	14	7	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	89	41	118	54	9	4	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)	73	33	131	60	7	3	1	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	28	140	64	10	5	1	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	20	140	64	24	11	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	20	146	67	19	9	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	59	27	146	67	5	2	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	87	40	121	56	4	2	3	1

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.



24 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bickleigh Down C of E Primary School, Plymouth PL6 7JW

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school.

Yours is a good school. We think that it looks after you and makes learning enjoyable.

Here are some of the things that we liked.

- You get a good start to your school life in the Reception class.
- Your achievement is good and your attainment is above average because of the good teaching you receive.
- The school looks after you well, which is why you have such an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and keep healthy.
- You make a big contribution to the running of the school through the school council and other jobs that you do.
- The school does a good job of involving your parents in your education.
- The school is led and managed well by your headteachers and the people who help them.

To help make your school even better, we have asked the staff and governors to:

- make sure that those of you who find learning difficult are really challenged in mathematics to do your very best and that marking, especially in mathematics, always makes it clear to you what you need to do next to improve your work
- find ways of providing an outdoor covered area for those of you in the Reception class
- help you learn more about the wide range of cultures found in Britain.

You can help by talking with your teachers about how you can make your work better in mathematics.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lake

Lead Inspector

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