

Bickleigh on Exe Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113421
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	357345
Inspection dates	21–22 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Rowena Onions

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	129
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeff Hird
Headteacher	David Goode
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Eight lessons were observed and five teachers were seen. Meetings were held with pupils, governors and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at data on pupils' progress, the school development plan, reports from the School Improvement Partner, governing body minutes and a range of other documentation. Seventy responses to the parental questionnaire were received.

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

- Pupils' progress, especially the progress of boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- The involvement of pupils in assessing and improving their work.
- The impact of the curriculum on pupils' enjoyment and progress. The impact of recent school improvement work.

Information about the school

This smaller than average school serving a rural area. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. An average percentage of pupils have a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, but the school has an above average proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs. Pupils are taught in mixed age group classes. Since the beginning of the current term, the local pre-school and before- and after-school clubs, have been housed in a purpose-built building on the school site. These were not included in the inspection because neither is managed by the school governors. This building also houses the school's 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

Bickleigh on Exe is a good school. It is successful in supporting pupils to become well rounded, enthusiastic, articulate young people. School improvement has resulted in an increase in pupils' progress, which is now good overall. Almost all pupils are making expected progress in both English and mathematics. In English, a good number of pupils are exceeding this expectation. There are not, however, as many pupils exceeding expectations in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. The school's inclusive ethos means that a warm welcome is extended to all. It has been very successful in helping a number of pupils with severe and complex special educational needs and some who have had difficulty settling into a number of other schools. As a result they feel part of the school community and make good personal and academic progress.

Good teaching, mixed with a curriculum which is successfully aimed at extending and enriching pupils' experiences, ensures both boys and girls are animated, involved and keen to learn. Although there are some differences in rates of progress amongst younger girls and boys, these differences are not evident by the time the pupils leave the school. Pupils join in with the wide-ranging extra activities and, through this, demonstrate not only excellent knowledge of how to stay healthy but an outstanding enthusiasm for doing so. Very secure relationships ensure pupils feel safe and supported and, through activities such as walking on the moors and sailing, by Year 6, pupils have a very healthy perspective on staying safe outside the school environment. The school is a community in which pupils support one another, partly through their good behaviour and because of the responsibilities they seek to take around and beyond the school.

At its last inspection, the school was asked to focus on helping pupils to understand how to improve their work. Development work has been successful, in that pupils are set and understand targets for longer term improvement, and they are given good oral feedback about their work. There are, however, some lessons where pupils are not sure what they are being expected to learn and how they will recognise success. This means they are not able to target their efforts during the lesson and are less able to generalise their learning to other situations. Marking, too, is not always as specific as it should be in showing pupils how to improve.

The personal and academic development of the pupils is at the heart of all that the school undertakes. Dedicated leadership and management ensure that the school seeks to improve and takes successful action to do so. Increased rates of progress and attendance demonstrate the success of such actions. The checking of pupils' progress has ensured that there are very few pupils who underachieve. It has not, however, been used as systematically to focus on further increasing the number of pupils who exceed

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expected progress, which currently differs from year group to year group. Staff and governors work as a team, both supporting and challenging each other. The education the school provides is greatly appreciated by parents. A typical comment received was, 'Bickleigh is a wonderful school... we wouldn't want our children to go anywhere else.' Teamwork, a track record of good self-evaluation and improvement and high ideals underpin the good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase progress in mathematics by:
 - ensuring that all pupils are fully challenged in all lessons
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to use mathematics in other subjects.
- Ensure the number of pupils making more than expected progress is consistently high in each year group by:
 - reviewing termly the progress made by each individual pupil
 - ensuring pupils know what they are expected to learn in each lesson
 - developing the use of marking to help pupils know what to do next.

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

Pupils like school and high attendance demonstrates their enjoyment of what is provided for them. These positive attitudes help them to learn. In a history lesson, for example, pupils showed great interest in a talk given by a local farmer and, through some insightful questions, developed skills of communication as well as historical knowledge. By Year 6, pupils demonstrate high levels of speaking and listening skills. The use of drama has helped accelerate progress in reading and writing and standards in these areas are now above average. Although a good number of pupils are now making more than expected progress, the number of pupils doing this is not yet consistent in all year groups. This is especially true in mathematics. Pupils demonstrate an ability to use their reading, writing and information and communication technology skills in a range of other subjects. When given the opportunity, for example to simulate a racing car in a 'Maths in Motion' project, they can use their mathematics skills well. However, mathematics is not yet systematically planned to be part of the work in other subjects. Pupils are proud of their school and are keen that it should be seen in a good light. Not only do they behave well, but they help and support one another, illustrating their good social and moral development. The empathy they show for others and the delight they take in learning new things demonstrate good spiritual development. Pupils' cultural development is good overall, but the school is correct in seeking ways to extend their knowledge of others living in Great Britain. Their grasp of basic skills and good attitudes mean pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Strong relationships underpin successful teaching. The pupils know their teachers try to make lessons interesting and fun and this causes them to work hard and concentrate well. Teaching assistants are deployed well in supporting different groups and are instrumental in promoting good progress. A successful programme of work assists pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress. In the main, teachers use assessment well to plan lessons that challenge pupils of differing attainments and to adapt lessons where there is a need. This is not, however, always the case. In some mathematics lessons, for example, there are times when activities, including the use of a commercial scheme, are not as productive as they should be, being used to keep pupils occupied rather than fully challenged. Although teachers are clear what they want pupils to learn in a lesson, they do not always communicate this clearly enough to the pupils to help them target their efforts. Additionally, marking is not always precise in showing pupils where they have been successful and where they could improve.

The school provides a dynamic programme of enrichment activities that is greatly appreciated by the pupils. Many parents comment on this, for instance writing: 'A wide variety of activities take place throughout the year which helps our child's development.' The emphasis on the use of English skills in other subjects has a positive impact on progress. As yet, this has not yet been fully developed in mathematics, although the

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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school plans to do this. The aspects of the curriculum which support pupils' personal development are particularly effective and combine with good care, guidance and support to ensure positive outcomes. There is a 'family' feel to the school, which supports pupils, including those with more complex needs, very well. Pupils' well-being and security are given the highest priority and actions taken promote these well.

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?

Ambitious school development is well planned and based on generally accurate self-evaluation incorporating the views of parents, pupils and other stakeholders. There are secure systems for checking the quality of provision, and the governors play an appropriate part in this. The governing body are keen to challenge the school to make improvements and are proactive in discussing developments. They understand the overall strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment, but have not, to date, been supplied with regular enough information about ongoing progress. The headteacher, staff and governors have a history of working together to push forward both major and minor projects. The funding and building of the very recently opened Early Years Foundation Stage unit, which is shared with the village preschool, is a notable achievement which is already supporting a very positive start to the children's school life. The safeguarding of pupils is a strong feature of the school. Documentation is of the highest quality and adults are constantly vigilant in promoting the physical, personal and emotional security of the pupils. Appropriate attention has been given to ensuring the school plays a good part in promoting community cohesion in the school and local area. Secure plans are in place for extending this to a wider community but these are yet to have impact. The school is very successful in including and promoting the progress of an increasingly wide range of pupils, demonstrating good attention to equality of opportunity.

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

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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	1
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

A well-planned and balanced curriculum and good teaching promote the good progress made by children in their first year in school. Relatively small year groups mean that attainment on entry differs from year to year, but is overall broadly average. By the end of Reception, most children attain the standards expected for their age. The number who exceed these varies with year groups, but evidence shows that children of different abilities and prior experiences make good progress. High expectations are sensitively promoted by stimulating activities and are based on good assessment procedures. Children were asked, for example, to 'write' about things they might see on a visit to the seaside. The teacher, using her knowledge of each child, encouraged some to draw pictures, others to 'pretend' write and others to use their knowledge of writing sounds to attempt to write words. At the time of the inspection, the children had been in school for a maximum of two weeks and were remarkably well settled in the brand new building. Strong relationships and a good induction process, including very good links with the preschool, have promoted this very well. This demonstrates very good leadership at a time of significant change.

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

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

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Most parents and carers are very happy with all aspects of the school. They are particularly pleased that their children like school and that it keeps them safe and helps them adopt healthy lifestyles. They feel the school is well led and managed and that their children are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Inspectors agree with these opinions. A small number of parents do not feel that their child is making good progress, especially in mathematics. Inspectors found that progress is not as good in mathematics as it is in English because not as many pupils exceed the expected progress. A small number of parents consider that not enough account is taken of their views. Inspection evidence shows that the school has good systems for listening to parents and seeking their views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bickleigh on Exe Church of England 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 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 129 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	83	11	16	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	44	36	26	37	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	30	43	35	50	4	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	43	31	44	3	4	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	41	59	24	34	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	34	49	31	44	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	53	77	16	23	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)	44	63	22	31	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	54	23	33	5	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	49	28	40	2	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	43	23	33	6	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	41	59	27	38	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	57	19	27	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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.



23 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bickleigh on Exe Church of England Primary School, Tiverton, EX16 8RE

We really enjoyed our two days at your school and would like to thank you for your help and friendly conversations. I know you will be pleased to know that we judge yours to be a good school.

Among the things we liked were:

- the good progress you are making, especially in reading and writing
- the fact that you get on so well together and have an exceptional understanding of how to stay safe and healthy
- teachers make your work interesting, helping you to concentrate in class and do your best with your work
- the wide range of things you are given opportunity do both in and after school
- the care adults take to make you feel safe and happy
- staff and governors are working together to further improve your school.

To make things even better, this is what we have asked your school to:

- make sure you do even better in maths by giving you work that helps you make progress in every lesson
- make sure that each one of you makes as much progress as possible every year by helping you to be clear what you are expected to learn by the end of each lesson and by marking your work in a way which shows you how to improve.

We are very glad that you like your school and think you are right to do so. By continuing to try hard and doing your best, you can help make your school even more successful.

Yours sincerely

Rowena Onions

Lead Inspector

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