



# The Batt CofE Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 123193  
**Local Authority** Oxfordshire  
**Inspection number** 281425  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Christopher Schenk HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Corn Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Witney
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		OX28 6DY
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01993 702392
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	266	<b>Fax number</b>	01993 776512
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Diana Wilson
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Christopher Payne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 March 2000		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The Batt School is a Voluntary Aided Church of England primary school of average size. About half its pupils start school in Reception. Most of the remainder transfer to the school in Year 3 from St Mary's Infant School. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is about half the national average and there are only a few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, at about half the national figure. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is around average and so is the proportion with a statement of special educational need.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school that has effective ways of identifying weaknesses and bringing about improvement. The school rightly concluded from last year's results that standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2 were not high enough, and that there was a relative weakness in mathematics by the end of Year 6. Effective actions have been taken. Consequently, pupils are now on track to reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2, and in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, that are above average and demonstrate good achievement. The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are also good. Pupils make good progress throughout the school as a result of the careful and effective teaching they receive. There are good systems for assessment that are well used to inform future planning, though there is a little too much variation between classes in the way that targets are displayed and used, in the quality of the marking and the extent to which subjects other than English, mathematics and science are assessed.

The pupils' personal development is outstandingly good. They grow into mature and articulate young people who work and play well together, respecting each other's differences and valuing each other's contributions. They are given a good deal of responsibility which prepares them well for later life. The school has a strong commitment to including fully the pupils who have learning or behavioural difficulties. They are given very good support by staff and respect by the other pupils so that they grow in confidence.

The curriculum is well planned to give pupils an exciting and interesting range of things to learn about, with a clear focus on developing their key skills. Computers are well used to enhance and extend the pupils' learning and music plays a strong part in the life of the school. Again, developments in the curriculum show that the school has a good capacity for improvement. A few years ago, the need was identified to use other subjects more frequently as a starting point for literacy. Some organisational changes were made, with literacy taught in classes rather than sets, and the links between subjects have been effectively strengthened. More recently, the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities has been further improved as a result of sharper identification of their individual targets. There is now systematic identification of gifted and talented pupils and in some classes they are being very well supported and challenged. The school is well placed to spread this good practice so that it becomes consistent.

The headteacher leads the school well, with good support from the governing body and from parents, whose response to a questionnaire sent out at the time of the inspection was overwhelmingly positive. A typical comment was, 'We find this to be a lovely school with a caring ethos where every child matters and is offered a host of opportunities to be a happy and fulfilled member of the community.' All members of staff share the school's commitment to continued improvement and contribute to bringing it about. Nevertheless, as the school has identified, the roles of subject leaders are in need of further development: currently, some of them do not have enough influence outside the key stage in which they are working.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Make the provision for gifted and talented pupils more consistent so that in all classes they are given the support and challenge that they need.
- Develop the role of subject leaders so that they all have an overview of their subject throughout the school.
- Share practices in assessment, tracking and marking to work towards manageable and consistent assessment for learning across the curriculum.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

When children come to the school in the Reception class their knowledge and skills vary quite widely and there is some variation in their overall attainment from year to year. The majority of the children who started part-time last September, and full-time in January 2007, began school with the knowledge and skills expected for their age. They are making good progress in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1. Although standards at the end of Year 2 were below average in reading and writing in 2006, this year the pupils are on track to reach standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are a little above average. The Year 2 pupils include several whose knowledge and skills were below those normally expected for their age when they first came to the school two and a half years ago. As a result, their present standards show good progress and achievement.

Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2006 were above average in English and science but there was a relative weakness in mathematics. The standards now being attained in Year 6 demonstrate that pupils are on track to attain results that are above average in English, mathematics and science. Since the same pupils attained around average levels in 2003 at the end of Key Stage 1 in this school and in St Mary's, their present standards show good progress and achievement. There are high standards in other subjects as well, notably in music.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress as a result of the good support they receive and of the careful identification of their needs.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

The excellent relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils themselves make a distinct contribution to the pupils' outstandingly good personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy their education very much indeed and this is reflected in their good attendance. Their behaviour is good and they respect and look after each other, valuing differences and celebrating each other's achievements. In one lesson, when a boy who was known by the others to be shy came to the front of the class to show how to solve a problem in mathematics, he was greeted with spontaneous applause.

Pupils know how to be healthy and the good emphasis given to physical education, as well as the wide range of sporting clubs, encourages them to take exercise. However, the school dinners do not sufficiently promote healthy eating because there are not enough choices. There is an active school council that has been effective in bringing about improvements, notably in the playground. Pupils of all ages are given responsibilities and the older pupils in particular take on a range of duties that include helping with the school administration. These duties, together with regular enterprise ventures and a school newspaper that is produced by the pupils, give them skills and experiences that make an outstanding contribution to their future economic well-being. The school has a high profile in the local community and the pupils contribute to the wider world through fund-raising for charity.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The teaching is good. Lessons are well planned, with a clear focus on what the pupils are to learn and are taught in a lively style that engages the interest and attention of the pupils. In classes and in sets, groups of pupils are given different tasks appropriate to their level of attainment, so that their work is not too easy and not too hard. The pupils benefit from contact with some teachers who have exceptionally good subject knowledge and this was evident in one outstandingly good mathematics lesson, in a music lesson and in a choir rehearsal, and in a French lesson taught by a visiting teacher. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution and in particular give good support to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. In all classes the marking is regular and encouraging and in some classes marking is very well used to help the pupils to understand how to improve.

The learning is also good. Pupils are developing their ability to assess their own work and that of their peers. This helps them to learn effectively and to know what they need to do next. They speak positively about the regular homework they are given: 'It's fun and it's not boring and it helps your parents as well.'

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good curriculum which promotes pupils' enjoyment of learning. In the Foundation Stage there are plenty of exciting activities that broaden the children's knowledge and understanding of the world and enable them to develop their skills in interesting and enjoyable contexts. Throughout the school, the pupils value the good range of exciting topics and creative activities. Some subjects, for example history, geography and design and technology, are taught in concentrated blocks so that pupils can get engrossed in their learning and use skills learnt in other subjects. In Year 1, for example, pupils designed and made a role play area for the Three Little Pigs, which complemented their work on traditional stories.

Pupils have good opportunities to participate in a wide range of enrichment activities and after-school clubs. Residential visits, visitors from the community and outings to places of interest all add to the pupils' enjoyment of learning. There are very good musical opportunities through class lessons, musical clubs and the wide range of instrumental tuition that is offered. The provision for modern languages is enhanced by visiting teachers from the nearby secondary school which has languages as one of its specialisms. As a result of recent improvements to individual education plans, the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities takes good account of their specific needs. Gifted and talented pupils are identified systematically. There are some good examples of challenge for gifted mathematicians and for pupils who have particular talents as well as some learning difficulties.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school cares for and supports its pupils very well indeed and provides them with good guidance for their academic work. Health and safety are a high priority and the school has carried out very comprehensive risk assessments and checks. Child protection procedures are very securely in place and all members of staff receive regular training. At playtimes pupils are looked after well by the adults on duty, and by each other.

The guidance pupils receive to help them do better in their work is effective. Targets are shared and understood by parents and pupils, and are regularly reviewed. However, the way that they are displayed and used varies from class to class and pupils sometimes need more time to act on the guidance they are given about how to improve their work.

Pupils value the very good support they are given in their learning, in their behaviour and in their personal development. Some Year 6 pupils said, 'The teachers are very helpful when you get stuck. If you are hurt or you have an allergy, the teachers will look after you and make sure that no-one makes fun of you.' As a result of this good support, the pupils, including those with learning and behavioural difficulties, feel secure and confident and are able to grow in self-esteem. Training for teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors enables them to make a very significant contribution to this area of the school's work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher has guided the school well in its drive to raise standards. The deputy head, who was on maternity leave at the time of the inspection, met with inspectors to discuss her role. The clear focus of the school development plan has led to distinct improvements in attainment. Leaders have accurately evaluated the strengths and relative weaknesses of the school. These evaluations have helped the school to know where it needs to go next. Governors are well informed and supportive, and know how well the school is doing against its identified priorities. Leaders and managers promote high quality care and education

for all pupils but subject leaders do not always have sufficient influence across the school. The constraints of the budget have meant that it has been necessary to have mixed-age classes this year in Years 3 and 4. Efforts are made to ensure that this method of organisation does not have an adverse effect on the pupils' progress; for example, the employment of a part-time teacher enables mathematics to be taught in separate year groups, with two sets in each year. Nevertheless, the school intends to revert to year groups when funding allows. Temporary staffing changes have been managed well to ensure continued high quality education for the pupils.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for your warm welcome when we came to your school. Nearly all of you seem to enjoy school very much and we can understand why because we enjoyed our visit too. When some of you told me what you particularly liked about the school, the two things that stood out were the interesting work that you are given and the way in which you can always ask for help when you need it. As one of you said, 'There are nice teachers and we have exciting topics.'

We think that you are outstandingly good at taking on responsibilities and looking after each other. You are well behaved and you have very positive attitudes to your learning. We are pleased to find that your headteacher and the rest of the staff are always on the look out for ways to make your good school even better, and that you help them with suggestions. We think the school has made some useful improvements recently and this has helped you all to get on well with your learning. We think that you are making good progress in your reading, writing and mathematics and in other subjects as well. We were particularly impressed by how beautifully you can sing.

Before we left, we talked to your headteacher and to some of the governors and the other teachers and we made three suggestions for the next stage in continuing to make the school better. We know that some of you, who have particular gifts and talents, are given good support and extra challenge and we would like this to happen in every class. We want all the teachers who lead the work in different subjects to have an impact throughout the school. We also think it would be good for the staff to share with each other how they mark your work and find out how well you are getting on so that they can decide the best ways of doing this, without taking too much time.

With best wishes

Christopher Schenk

Her Majesty's Inspector