



Bishopswood Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116013
Local Authority Hampshire
Inspection number 290394
Inspection dates 31 January –1 February 2007
Reporting inspector Malcolm Johnstone

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Barlows Road
School category	Community		Tadley
Age range of pupils	7–11		RG26 3NA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01189812738
Number on roll (school)	221	Fax number	01189816515
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Julian Burt
		Headteacher	Mrs Ann Morrow
Date of previous school inspection	6 November 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is of average size for a school of this type. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and only a small number of these pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is average, as is the proportion of pupils who have been identified as having learning difficulties. The headteacher has been in post for just over a year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

Although this is an improving school it is not yet fully effective. The leadership team has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and there is tangible commitment to improve further. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and there is excellent care and support for vulnerable pupils. As one parent said, 'Teachers are very caring and supportive.' Behaviour is good. Most pupils are eager to learn and enjoy their time in school. In these aspects, the school is providing an acceptable standard of education. However, it is clear that the achievements of the pupils in the oldest classes are not good enough. Recent improvements in teaching are starting to accelerate the rate of pupils' progress throughout the school, Even so, standards in Year 6, though average, are not high enough in the light of pupils' starting points. Too few pupils reach the higher levels in English and mathematics and pupils' achievements since their Year 2 assessments are inadequate. Therefore, in accordance with Section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' academic achievements.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher provides good leadership. In her year in post, she has quickly gained the confidence of parents and staff. As one parent commented, 'the new headteacher has made a positive impact on the school'. With good support from the local authority she has instigated better curricular planning, tracking, target setting systems and monitoring of teaching. This has meant that self-evaluation is more accurate because it is based on a reliable evidence base. However, the new systems are not embedded securely across the school. As a consequence, they are not having enough impact on pupils' achievements. There is a democratic approach to school improvement and the skills of other key leaders, teachers and the governing body are satisfactory and developing well. This is providing a more coherent approach to school improvement. These features of the school's work mean there is good capacity for further improvement.

Teaching is satisfactory with some that is good. Assessment systems are satisfactory but teachers do not always use the information gained to ensure that work given to pupils matches their needs. This means that some of the work is either too easy or too hard.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils say that they feel safe from bullying. They know how to lead a healthy lifestyle and take part in the good range of extra-curricular activities provided. Relationships are good and the school is an orderly community. Pupils' satisfactory basic skills, their ability to work together and the mature approach to learning shown by most establish a sound base for their future economic well-being.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by improving pupils' achievements in English and mathematics
- Ensure that teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are used more effectively to ensure pupils of all abilities achieve as well as they can

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Achievement is unsatisfactory. The national test results for 2006 show that overall standards for Year 6 pupils were broadly in line with the national average. Their performance in science was stronger than that in English and mathematics. Pupils' results in English and mathematics were weaker because far too few pupils reached the higher levels. Progress from their starting points in Year 3 was inadequate, and in mathematics was in the bottom 2% nationally. There has been recent improvement in the quality of teaching that is accelerating progress across the school, including that of pupils in Year 6. The quality of pupils' work in Year 6, however, is still not as good as it should be after four years of teaching in these subjects..

Pupils in other year groups are now making satisfactory progress as a result of improvements in teaching and learning and assessment. This is substantiated by at least satisfactory progress seen in lessons during the inspection. More challenging and realistic targets are being set for pupils and this is raising expectations of what pupils should achieve. Pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities make satisfactory progress. This is due to effective additional support and individual plans that plot clear and achievable steps.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Behaviour is good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They have a clear understanding of how their actions affect others and respect the school code of conduct. Attendance is similar to the national average for primary schools and most pupils enjoy coming to school. Relationships are good and pupils are polite and courteous to visitors and to each other. A secure and happy environment has been established which enables pupils to feel valued and positive about their achievements. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for planning aspects of their own learning. Pupils new to the school say they soon make new friends. On the few occasions when bullying occurs, pupils say it is dealt with quickly. Pupils know about healthy eating and how to stay safe. Pupils participate enthusiastically in sports and the new climbing wall promotes physical development and confidence well. The school council is involved in decision making and pupils are proud of their part in developing the school playground. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future economic wellbeing.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The headteacher has a secure knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and is determined to increase the proportion of good teaching. This is vital since teachers have to work more effectively to fill the significant gaps in pupils' learning. Teachers develop good relationships with pupils and establish clear routines and standards of behaviour which pupils accept. This means that pupils are well behaved and most are keen to learn. Generally, teachers plan activities that engage pupils because they are linked to a practical and meaningful outcome. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils prepared a persuasive argument for or against homework. They did research at home and were planning to present a report for two governors. Teachers' planning has improved over the past year. However, plans are not flexible enough to allow for information from the day-to-day outcomes of lessons to be assimilated into subsequent learning. This means that some of the work is not matched effectively to pupils' needs and goes some way to explain the legacy of past underachievement. Teaching assistants work well with pupils who have learning difficulties. Their needs have been clearly identified and planned for and as result, they achieve satisfactorily.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is balanced and all subjects receive appropriate coverage. As a result of recent initiatives, planning has improved and links subjects together effectively. Improvements in the planning over the past year are filling prior gaps in pupils' learning and they are now making satisfactory progress in the development of literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of additional activities involving well attended school clubs, visits and participation in local sports events. These extend learning opportunities well. The computer suite is used well to develop pupils' skills in information and communication technology. There is still scope to extend opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills across all subjects. The curriculum promotes pupils' personal, social and emotional development well and successfully supports healthy living and staying safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are cared for well and there are good procedures to ensure they are safe. Parents trust the school to take care of their children and pupils say an adult is always available if they have any problems or concerns. Systems for supporting pupils who have learning difficulties are good, well managed and inclusive. This enables these pupils to make steady progress. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Tracking systems help teachers to accurately identify those pupils who need extra help and target additional support

accordingly. Target setting is not firmly established and day-to-day assessment is not used consistently to plan work matched to pupils' abilities. There are regular risk assessments and child protection arrangements are good. There are effective partnerships with other local schools to ensure smooth transition of pupils both in and out of the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher is giving the school clear direction and the necessary momentum. In consultation with staff and governors, she has produced a good school improvement plan. This has identified the right priorities for the coming year. Over the past year, all teachers have worked hard to follow her lead and establish systems which will help raise pupils' achievement. The senior management team has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and the areas that need further development. The school's self-evaluation is accurate because it is based on a more secure and reliable evidence base. The support provided by the local authority has been effective in helping the school in its drive to improve. Management at all levels is improving and there are comprehensive systems to track and assess pupils' progress, set more realistic targets and monitor the quality of teaching. The school recognises that these systems are not yet embedded securely. Whilst pupils are now making satisfactory progress in current lessons, there has not been time for the improvements to make a significant impact on pupils' overall achievements. Governors are developing their role as critical friend well and are increasingly holding the school accountable for the quality of education it provides. The opinions of parents, pupils and staff are sought and acted upon. The school is developing good links with a range of other schools and organisations. This is also helping to promote further improvement.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. All the adults who work in school care for you and are supportive and interested in all that you do. They make sure that everyone is included and provide lots of extra opportunities for you to enjoy. We were very impressed with the opening of the climbing wall and I know you are excited about using this. It was good to see many of your parents at the opening.

We saw several interesting lessons, in which you all worked hard. You were clearly enjoying these lessons and were eager to take part in the discussions that took place. We were pleased to see that you know about healthy eating, keeping fit and how to keep safe. You behave well and you told us there is always someone you can go to if you have any worries. You get on well together and it was great to see how well you helped each other in lessons when working in groups.

Your headteacher is bringing in many new ideas that are helping the school to improve. However, we have issued the school with a Notice to Improve. This means that we found some areas of the school's work which should be better. To help make sure that every one of you achieves your best, we have asked the school to make sure all your lessons enable you to do the best that you can in English and mathematics. This will mean that teachers will use information about your progress to plan work that is neither too easy nor too hard for you. We know you will help them by continuing to try your best in all lessons.

We wish you the very best for the future

Mr. M.J. Johnstone (Lead Inspector)