



Badgemore Community School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123042
Local Authority Oxfordshire
Inspection number 292568
Inspection dates 18–19 October 2006
Reporting inspector Christopher Parker

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hop Gardens
School category	Community		Henley-on-Thames
Age range of pupils	4–11		RG9 2HL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01491 575665
Number on roll (school)	72	Fax number	01491 575665
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Dominic Flitcroft
		Headteacher	Ms Melanie Carruthers
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 18–19 October 2006	Inspection number 292568
--------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school serving an area of mainly social housing. One third of pupils has learning difficulties. A quarter of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups. Ten pupils, predominantly from Eastern Europe, are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion taking free school meals is average.

Over the last few years the number of pupils has fallen but it has risen again in the last year. Almost all of the teachers have joined the school since September 2005. A new headteacher took temporary charge of the school in January 2006 before being appointed to the substantive post in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school is providing a satisfactory education for the pupils. The combined efforts of the local authority, governors and staff have halted a marked decline in the school's performance. Following a period of intensive monitoring and review the school has emerged with robust and clear plans to raise standards, based on accurate self evaluation.

Pupils, including those in the Foundation Stage, are now achieving satisfactorily. They are making progress at least at the expected rate but many have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. The legacy of past underachievement is steadily being eroded but standards remain below average. Standards are not as high as they should be, particularly in writing and mathematics.

Over the last year the headteacher and teachers have made many improvements to make sure the pupils are taught satisfactorily and have a broad and relevant curriculum. The pupils say that the school, 'has improved a lot,' and they enjoy lessons. Systematic approaches to recording and checking each pupil's progress now make it possible for underachievement to be tackled and more able pupils to be challenged. The teachers are making good use of this information to set tasks that are well suited to different ages and abilities. The pupils feel they are doing well because they have targets to help them to, 'get to the next level.' Support and intervention programmes are being used to good effect. The pupils' work is conscientiously marked but precise guidance on how they should improve their next piece of work is inconsistent.

Most pupils behave well and the 'Sunshine Friends' ensure that everyone is safe and has a friend at playtimes. The children take it in turns to be a 'Sunshine Friend' and welcome this responsibility. Pupils say they feel happy and safe at school. As a result attendance has improved this year and is now broadly average. The school now has effective systems for supporting pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. Arrangements to help those with learning difficulties are effective and, as a result, they make satisfactory progress. Most parents are pleased with what the school offers. One parent commented that her daughter is, 'well cared for at all times.'

The local authority's concerns and intervention have prompted many changes, not least in the role of the governors. The chair of governors has been very active in reversing the school's fortunes and establishing an effective governing body. Strong partnerships with the local authority support services and the work of specialist advisers have proved beneficial. The new headteacher has established effective management and clear leadership. The school now has a secure platform on which to implement its impressive plans to sustain improvement and enhance the teaching and learning. Although much remains to be done the school is now well placed to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics by promoting consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve.

- Make better use of marking to provide clear guidance for pupils on how to improve their next piece of work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The pupils are now making progress at the expected rate and achieving satisfactorily. The results of national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2006 were below average. The number of pupils in each year group is small. Seven pupils took the tests at the end of Year 6. Consequently, comparisons with national trends need careful consideration but the standard of work in pupils' exercise books confirms that standards in writing and mathematics are not as high as they should be.

From a below average starting point, pupils are making secure progress in the Foundation Stage. However, fewer children than usual reach the goals set for the end of the Reception Year. The school's comprehensive tracking of each pupil's progress shows that they are now making satisfactory progress between Years 1 and 6. For example, between tests taken at the end of Year 4 in 2005 and the end of Year 5 in 2006 the pupils made at least the expected gains. Detailed analysis shows sentence structure is weak in pupils' writing and the application of their mathematical skills to solve problems is not good enough. Handwriting and presentation are also weaknesses.

The increasing number of pupils who are learning to speak English are making satisfactory progress and some are making good strides forward in both their spoken and written English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. The older pupils talk openly and confidently about the extent of recent improvement. They say they enjoy all aspects of school life. They know that they need to work hard to reach the levels of which they are capable. Assemblies foster a pride in the school and a shared desire to continue to improve. The pupils are happy to volunteer their ideas about where further improvements are needed.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Most pupils behave well and listen attentively to their teacher and to each other. A few find this difficult and need to be reminded how important it is to listen carefully and concentrate on their work. Pupils enjoy and value physical activities, particularly swimming. They say that what they have learned about healthy eating has made them eat more fruit and vegetables.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some strong elements of teaching have been established. Clear planning enables the teachers to set out precisely what they want the pupils to learn. They make it clear to the pupils what they are looking for in their finished work and what pupils must, should and could achieve. Teaching assistants are well deployed. The support for the youngest children is particularly effective.

The work in pupils' exercise books shows that expectations of presentation and the quality of writing are not always high enough. Work is conscientiously marked but precise guidance to improve the next piece of work is not always offered. Nevertheless, requests by teachers to make improvements to a piece of work are responded to positively by pupils, for example, by suggesting additional describing words to make their work more interesting.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and has some good features. The pupils are appreciative of the range of after school clubs now on offer. Activities that promote good personal development have resulted in the pupils' keen awareness of healthy eating, the benefits of physical exercise and the dangers of substance abuse. The visit of a local police officer heightened the pupils' awareness of the need to remain safe and act responsibly on Halloween.

The pupils say that they enjoy a wide range of subjects and recount their favourite art, music and science activities. The accommodation is used well. A recent competition to create interesting book corners proved very popular and has generated much interest from the pupils. Increasing use is being made of ICT across the curriculum. Interactive whiteboards provide considerable motivation for the pupils. However, opportunities to write and use mathematical skills in other subjects are not planned and exploited consistently.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The care, guidance and support of the pupils are satisfactory. The school takes its responsibilities for safeguarding pupils seriously. The headteacher reports to the governing body on all aspects of the pupils' safety. Child protection arrangements are in place and further training for all staff is planned.

In many respects the guidance provided for pupils is good. The pupils say that they find the targets the teachers set for them very useful and value their teacher's comments on their work. They like to know, 'where they have gone wrong,' but guidance on how to improve their next piece of work is offered infrequently.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school is recovering successfully from a period of decline because of the effective work of the chair of governors and the headteacher. They are now being well supported by the governing body and the whole staff team in their quest to raise standards.

Following a decline after the previous inspection the school is recovering. The headteacher's systematic approach to all aspects of management has resulted in many recent improvements and the, currently, satisfactory provision. Her work has created a solid foundation for further improvement. Plans for sustaining improvement and further development are impressive in their detail, clarity and in that they can be easily evaluated against precise success criteria.

The governing body has made effective use of the skills of recently appointed governors. They have also used external expertise, for example, 'to squeeze as much as possible out of the budget!' Governors are now playing an increasingly effective role in school self evaluation and in determining priorities for further improvement.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	2
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?	3

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?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

This letter is to tell you about the recent inspection and to thank those of you who gave up your time to talk to me. There have been many changes at your school over the last few years. You told me about the recent improvements. You enjoy lessons and feel the school is now giving you many opportunities. You particularly like the after school clubs. At the moment the school is providing a satisfactory education for you but the headteacher has got good plans to make it even better.

The governors are the people who are responsible for making sure your school performs well. They have worked very hard, over the last year or so, along with the headteacher to give you the opportunities to do well in lessons. They have been successful and you are now making the progress you should in English and mathematics. I have asked the teachers to do all they can to help you to get better and better at writing and using your numeracy skills to solve problems. You can help by doing your best handwriting and presenting your work carefully.

The teachers give you lots of help, set you targets and mark all your work. Sometimes, when they mark your exercise books, they tell you what you need to do to improve your next piece of work. I have asked them to do this more often.

I enjoyed visiting your school and hope that it continues to improve and help you to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Parker Lead inspector