

Bishop Henderson Church of England Primary School, Taunton

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123852
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	292815
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Paul Sadler

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 on roll	
School	403
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Blakemore
Headteacher	Tracey Khodabandehloo
Date of previous school inspection	11 March 2002
School address	Henderson Close Taunton TA1 4TU
Telephone number	01823 274770
Fax number	01823 325729

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

In this large school the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is about average. The proportion of pupils of minority ethnic origin is below average. There have been recent increases in the proportion of pupils who speak a language other than English at home and are at an early stage of learning English, although this remains below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Parents recognise this and typically say how the school 'has allowed my child to develop and flourish'. Throughout the school there is outstanding achievement. The high level of achievement is evident in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. A key strength of the school is the high standards and high levels of achievement across a range of subjects such as history, geography, music, art and information and communication technology (ICT).

Very good provision in the Reception Year ensures that children make rapid progress in learning to read and write simple sentences and to begin to solve problems involving numbers. By the time they start Year 1 they are attaining above the expected levels of skills. Pupils also make very good progress in Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2 they write accurate, extended pieces and confidently perform simple calculations, attaining above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. They make very good progress in Years 3 to 6 and attain above average standards in national tests in English, mathematics and science. Much of the written work is of exceptional quality, achieved through note-taking and redrafting. The high levels of achievement in a range of subjects was epitomised in studies of the town of Minehead produced by Year 6 pupils which brought together literacy skills, knowledge of history and geography and very good quality art work.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are also outstanding. The school's Christian ethos promotes excellent spiritual and moral development. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep safe in school, on the roads and at home. Attendance levels are very high indicating how much pupils enjoy the many opportunities offered by the outstanding curriculum and the wide range of additional activities including French, music, sport and breakfast and after school clubs. Pupils' behaviour is good. They report that any bullying which occurs is dealt with effectively by staff.

The outstanding achievement is as a result of excellent teaching. Teachers plan lessons and programmes of work together to meet the needs of all their pupils. Pupils rise to teachers' very high expectations. Lessons make very good use of ICT, for instance in developing skills of mental mathematics by using the number games from the television show 'Countdown'. All pupils, especially those with learning difficulties and disabilities, receive very good support from the excellent team of teaching assistants. Much of the marking of work is good, and one of the school's priorities is to ensure that it is consistently good throughout the school.

Pupils receive good care, guidance and support. Child protection arrangements are very good and all requirements are in place. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and is used to set targets and to give high quality academic guidance so that pupils know how to improve their work. Older pupils, and their parents, are rightly concerned that there is a lack of privacy when they change for sport and other activities.

Leadership and management are excellent. The very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses has led to a significant rise in standards over the last three years. Senior leaders all make a very positive impact on standards. The governing body is highly effective and gives clear leadership and direction. Improvements since the last inspection have been outstanding and the highly skilled staff team is exceptionally well placed to continue with these improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that older pupils have suitable privacy when changing for sport and other activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding and pupils attain exceptionally high standards. In the Foundation Stage, children make very good progress and almost all attain and many exceed the goals set for children of their age; for instance, they can read and write a simple sentence. The very good progress continues in Years 1 to 6 so that by the time pupils leave they are attaining particularly high standards in English and mathematics, and above average standards in science. Test results at the end of Year 6 have risen consistently over the past three years and are set to continue rising this year. Throughout the school, much of the work is of very high quality and demonstrates the use of a wide range of skills including literacy, numeracy, ICT and artistic skills. Pupils also achieve highly in other subjects such as music and physical education. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve equally well. The school has welcomed the pupils who are at an early stage of learning English; they are also making good progress as a result of the skilful support they receive. Many of these pupils are rapidly gaining proficiency in speaking English.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They work and play well together and show understanding of a very wide range of world cultures experienced through music, art and literature. They behave very well in lessons in spite of the cramped nature of some classrooms. Pupils' understanding of how to lead healthy lives is good and the school is currently consulting on the provision of healthy food at lunchtime. Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe as a result of such activities as visits from the police and fire service, and cycle safety training. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community, for instance through membership of the school council or acting as playground friends, and to the wider community through performances and charity collection. The skills pupils will need in adult life are developing very well because of their excellent academic progress.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is excellent as teachers have a very good understanding of each pupil's progress and learning needs. Teachers plan work that is suitable for the most and least able and those who have very specific learning needs. Pupils in the Reception classes are taught through a variety of methods that develop their learning skills very well. All lessons proceed at a fast pace which retains pupils' interest and gives them many opportunities for discussion and teamwork. Very good use is made of ICT resources such as the interactive whiteboards in every classroom. Most of the marking is good. The best not only points out how the work can be improved but also gives the pupil an opportunity to respond. The school has identified as a priority to ensure that marking is of equally high quality in every class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. Pupils in the Foundation Stage have a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities which make very good use of the wide range of resources available. For older pupils the required curriculum is greatly enriched by additional subjects such as French. All pupils, including the most able, are fully challenged. Music is a great strength and pupils excitedly tell visitors that the school has 'the biggest brass band in Somerset and Devon'. There is an exceptional range of extra activities, especially in sport, drama and the arts. Excellent use is made of educational visits and activities are planned very well to develop skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT through other subjects such as science, geography and history.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils receive good care, guidance and support as staff put pupils' welfare first. All current requirements for child protection are in place. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and is used to set targets and help them to make progress. Pupils have a good understanding of how they are doing. Both parents and pupils feel that staff listen to and act on their concerns. When pupils change their clothing for the many activities that require this, they do so in the classroom. This causes embarrassment to older pupils, especially girls, and is of concern to their parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Under the leadership of the headteacher standards and pupils' achievement have risen consistently over the last few years. This is as a result of an accurate analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses followed by assiduous development of the strengths in order to remedy the weaknesses. Many staff and governors speak of the headteacher's subtle introduction of new ideas that have led to success. Subject leaders, and others with management responsibility, have developed into confident and well-informed leaders whose work has contributed significantly to improvement. Work continues to be monitored and improved at all levels within the school. School leaders have been supported very well by the governing body, which has also established high aspirations for the school. The Foundation Stage is led very well. There have been many improvements since the last inspection, most importantly in the standards pupils attain, and the school is exceptionally well placed to continue with these improvements.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	1
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

25 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bishop Henderson CE Primary School, Taunton, TA1 4TU

I very much enjoyed talking and listening to you and seeing your work when I visited your school recently. I want to thank those of you who told me about how good the school is. This letter is to tell you what I thought of your school.

I agree with you, and with most of your parents, that the school is excellent. These are some of the best things about it.

- Your work is excellent and you make very good progress. I was especially impressed with the studies on Minehead produced by Year 6.
- You are taught very well because the teachers know what each of you needs to learn, and how to teach it to you. They are very good at showing you how to improve your work.
- There are lots of exciting things to do in lessons and clubs. Reception children have lots of interesting games and toys. You learn many different subjects such as French and drama. Music in the school is excellent.
- Your behaviour is good and you work well together. Your attendance is excellent, showing how much you enjoy school.
- You know a lot about how to be healthy and safe. You told me you enjoy talks by police and firefighters and learning how to ride your bikes properly.
- The staff tell your parents how you are getting on and are good at using people from outside the school to help you.
- The headteacher and the other staff run the school very well indeed and it has improved a lot over the last few years.

Some of the older pupils and your parents told me you are embarrassed when changing for physical education (PE) in front of everyone, so I have asked the school to make sure you are given some privacy when changing.

Yours faithfully

Paul Sadler Lead inspector