

Binstead Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118176
Local Authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	312834
Inspection date	30 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	164
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Whittle
Headteacher	Mrs Helen Flynn
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	Hazlemere Avenue Binstead Ryde PO33 3SA
Telephone number	01983 562341
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Age group	4–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, and investigated pupil achievement levels, how effectively teachers use assessment information to plan work and set targets for individual pupils, and how well subject co-ordinators and other managers monitor and evaluate the impact of their work. The inspector gathered evidence from an analysis of information and data about pupils' achievement provided by the school, observations of parts of lessons, parents' questionnaires and discussions with the headteacher, other managers, a governor and pupils. The inspector did not investigate other aspects of the school's work in detail, but found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified. These judgements have been included in the report.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average primary school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below that expected nationally. The number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is well below average, and there are few pupils, for whom English is an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties, mainly relating to behavioural, emotional and social issues, is below the national average. There has been a recent period where an acting head teacher has been in place, but the permanent headteacher has now returned. The school has a number of national awards, including the Healthy School and Basic Skills Quality Mark. It is an Investors in People organisation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding education for its pupils. This is the consequence of extremely skilled and experienced leadership, which places a high emphasis on the quality of pupils' learning. This explains why, despite the absence of senior staff who are regularly seconded elsewhere, outstanding standards and achievement levels have been maintained. High academic standards are also the result of the excellent level of pupils' personal development and the pastoral care provided. Pupils feel safe, secure and are able to concentrate on their schoolwork. One parent wrote, 'We have been very impressed with not only the good achievements our daughter has made, but the whole atmosphere of the school, which is welcoming and inclusive'.

Pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics, by the end of Year 2, have consistently been well above the national average over recent years. Given the broadly average starting points of these pupils, this reflects outstanding levels of achievement. This includes pupils with learning difficulties. Those pupils with behavioural, emotional and social issues benefit very well from careful tracking of their progress and early and effective additional support, including that of skilled learning support assistants. A parent wrote that, 'the teaching assistants deserve an award for their empathy, patience and understanding of the individual's needs'. During Years 3 and 4, pupils continue to achieve extremely well. They leave the school with standards well above those expected for their age. This includes pupils in the mixed year groups, about which a minority of parents expressed concern. Particular strengths lay in the standards of reading and mathematics. Work seen during the inspection confirmed this picture.

Achievement levels reflect the high quality of learning and teaching. A parent wrote that, 'Teaching is excellent, my child is always being challenged to do her best, in a happy and supportive environment'. Methodical monitoring of lessons and helpful feedback by leadership contribute to the consistently high level of teaching. Pupils say they really enjoy the varied activities in lessons. They settle quickly, and behave very well, because teachers make very clear their high expectations and what they wish the pupils to learn. During lessons, this is revisited, and reinforced, prior to further challenging tasks being set. It is a reflection of the high level of teachers' on-going assessment that enables them to identify the next steps in pupils' learning. Questioning is very secure, and very appropriate emphasis is given in mathematics to expecting pupils to fully explain their answers. Pupils' independence is excellent, because teachers promote it through handing responsibility for learning to them. In one lesson, this involved pupils checking the accuracy of others' contributions.

Very good leadership, including visits to other schools, has led to the development of an outstanding curriculum. This meets the literacy and numeracy needs of pupils extremely well. It has also introduced a highly effective theme approach. This increases the range of experiences for pupils, and which in their words are, 'really good topics -we enjoy them', and they, 'make you imagine'. Drama, visits, music, and more links between subjects are very well used. There is very good enhancement through clubs, visits and visitors, and by the highly effective support for pupils' emotional needs. 'Feelings thermometers' allow pupils to show if they are happy, sad, or anxious, and adults quickly address their needs. In the 'Dream Room', pupils relax and discuss issues designed to boost their self-esteem. The very effective impact of this is reflected in the pupils' views. 'You want more', said one boy, and another pupil wrote that it's 'like a magic dream in hospital'.

Pupils have excellent knowledge of how to keep healthy and safe. They talk animatedly about what makes a healthy dinner, whilst others tell of the new experience of cooking and eating Indian food. Pupils say that adults respect them, that their views are identified through the effective school and eco-councils, and are acted upon. They thoroughly enjoy school and attendance is consistently good. The pupils speak particularly highly of what are outstanding contributions to the community. They work alongside local groups when preparing for carnival and lantern parades. They also participate in the annual Remembrance service and various church celebrations, whilst older pupils regularly play host to elderly citizens. The high level of basic skills helps prepare pupils well for later life. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to experience entrepreneurial activities.

Care, guidance and support for pupils is good; pastoral care is outstanding. A particular strength is the forging of effective partnerships with parents that benefit pupils' learning. In the 'Share' sessions parents see what their children are learning and make some very special resources to use at home. Another very effective strategy is when pupils, in turn, are identified as the 'Star Pupil'. Their self-esteem is boosted when they choose their best work to show to others. However, strategies also involve parents working alongside their child in lessons, and discussing progress and targets with the teacher. Very effective systems track pupils' progress and identify where additional support is needed. However, not all pupils benefit from marking that clearly shows what pupils need to do to improve. Also, not all teachers consistently refer to the use of, for example, literacy targets, when pupils are writing in other subjects.

The very high standards within the school are the consequence of outstanding leadership and management at all levels, and an established routine of sustaining success through encouraging shared responsibility. There are very well used monitoring and evaluation procedures, which quickly identify where fine-tuning of school systems are needed. The school is not complacent. School analysis, for example, identified a relative weakness in writing standards. New approaches were introduced regarding spelling, phonics teaching, and the encouragement of speaking and listening. These are now resulting in improved standards, particularly for boys and higher ability pupils. The outstanding governing body uses the expertise of members exceptionally well. For example, in the area of health and safety, and in the monitoring of pupils' work that tracks the effectiveness of changes in the school's approach to writing. There is an excellent capacity to improve the school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The children enter Reception with broadly average skills and knowledge for their age. However, there is a trend of below the expected levels in aspects of literacy and numeracy. New leadership in the Foundation Stage has focused on these elements, with dramatic results. One parent wrote, 'The Reception class is very important, and I think it is amazing what they achieve in their first year of school'. Children's work and assessments show that they are achieving exceptionally well. Similarly, their personal development progresses very effectively. In lessons, they are very polite, share resources and take turns extremely well. The curriculum is very effective in developing the children's independence and in allowing them to take decisions. Whilst the use of the external area is good, the school rightly recognises the need to maximise its use.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils know clearly how to improve their work, by eradicating the inconsistencies in the quality of feedback through marking, and the use of targets.

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Annex A

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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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	2

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

08 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Binstead Primary School, Ryde, PO33 3SA

Thank you for your welcome during my recent visit and for being so eager to tell me about your school. I agree with you that it is an outstanding school. This means that it does many things very well indeed.

You told me how good your lessons are, that they are fun and that you enjoy the various things you are given to do. I feel the same, but also believe that, because of some excellent teaching, you do really well in English and mathematics. You work hard and want to do your best, and this helps you to make excellent progress.

The way you develop as young people is excellent. You are polite, respect and listen to each other and yet you enjoy yourselves. I particularly liked the way you involve yourselves in the school and the local area. To the older pupils, who take time to entertain the elderly - well done!

You told me that you feel very safe in school. You especially liked being the Star Pupil, and I agree that this is very good. It really does encourage you to show your best work, and I very much like the way that it involves your parents. The school works with your parents very well.

Much of the success of the school is also due to the efforts of the adults, including the governors. They really do care for you and want to help you to do well. They are always looking at ways of improving things even more. Your headteacher leads the school extremely skilfully, and it runs very smoothly indeed. Your parents certainly think so! I noticed that a few of you do not have a clear enough idea about what you have to do to improve your work. I have asked the school to make sure that all marking gives you this and that your learning targets are referred to more regularly.

Thank you again, and I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Michael Pye

Lead Inspector