

Baltonsborough Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	123740
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	327975
Inspection date	10 December 2008
Reporting inspector	Christine Huard

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	90
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anne Moody
Headteacher	Lesley Fenwick
Date of previous school inspection	28 September 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Ham Street Baltonsborough Glastonbury BA6 8PX
Telephone number	01458 850526
Fax number	01458 851078

Age group	4–11
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Amended Report Addendum

Report amended due to factual inaccuracy

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

the effectiveness of systems to ensure that high standards are sustained

the success of the 'Learning to Lead' project and the impact it is having on pupils' personal development

the effectiveness of induction for new staff and their roles in ensuring the future success of the school.

Evidence was gathered from an examination of the school's documentation, parents' questionnaires and pupils' work, observations of pupils in classes, around the school and in the playground, as well as interviews with the staff, pupils, governors and parents. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, are not justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average. Children attend the school from the local area and surrounding villages, with many coming from further afield. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly average. Provision for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is made in the Reception class. The school has Healthy Schools status and holds the Activemark. It is taking part in the pilot of the 'Learning to Lead' project and has also become a flagship school for Food for Life.

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. It provides an excellent education in an exhilarating and lively learning environment. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and comments such as 'the school has very high standards' and 'all children are given opportunities to excel and develop their talents' echo the views of a great many. The key to the school's success is the dynamic and vibrant leadership of the headteacher and the whole-hearted commitment and support of all staff and governors. All willingly take on new challenges in order to provide the best possible education for the pupils.

The introduction of the 'Learning to Lead' project, one of the few primary schools to be included in the pilot, has been particularly successful. It has led to a high level of pupils' involvement in decision making. They have been responsible for several important initiatives in the school. These have included the scrapping of the old computer suite and in its place planning, designing and resourcing a new Book Room, as well as re-siting the computers more usefully. The project has resulted in the school developing pupils who are articulate and confident. They value the opportunities they have been given and say, 'Some people thought we weren't old enough to take this amount of responsibility, but we are.' They are, because, as they explained, 'We have also learned what not to do and when we need to ask for extra help.'

The whole school is involved in the project and its effects are far reaching. They extend into lessons where pupils happily adopt the roles of team leaders and lead discussions in small groups. This was evident in Years 5 and 6 where pupils were discussing maturely how they could present a scene from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The excellent behaviour, eager responses and excitement generated in each classroom illustrate how pupils greatly enjoy all aspects of their education. They bubble with enthusiasm. Teachers ensure that pupils know what they are going to learn. They use resources, such as interactive whiteboards, skilfully. In these mixed age group classes, teachers are particularly successful at planning a wide range of tasks. These are carefully devised to meet the learning needs of all pupils so that all are appropriately challenged or supported. This excellent planning is a key factor in why the pupils manage to achieve so well. Pupils are encouraged to explore and share ideas with their peers and in small groups. They say marking is particularly helpful and even the youngest pupils know and understand their individual targets.

Children in the Reception class receive an outstanding start to their education. Activities match their individual needs in vibrant and stimulating learning areas, both indoors and out. In Years 1 to 6, pupils sparkle. They attain exceptionally high standards in English, mathematics and science as well as in a range of other subjects, such as geography, physical education and drama. Achievement in these areas is outstanding because the teaching is excellent. The pupils say, 'We are taught in a really fun way, the teachers motivate us so that we really want to learn.' The school makes excellent provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who do as well as other pupils. Similarly, pupils who are especially gifted or talented are identified, and care is taken to make certain they are sufficiently challenged, both in the classroom and in many out-of-school activities. Parents really appreciate this involvement; as one said, 'The care and support offered to my child is exceptional.' The curriculum for English, mathematics and science is exciting, creative and imaginative. There are many vibrant displays of pupils' work showing the breadth of the inspirational curriculum in these areas and the way in which pupils' work is valued. Excellent links are made across a range of subjects and the use of information and communication technology is fully integrated into all subjects. The curriculum

is in the process of being developed further as the creativity and excitement that is embedded within the core subjects is not yet fully established across all areas taught. An exceptional range of visits, visitors and clubs serve to enrich pupils' learning further.

Pupils' academic progress is very carefully checked and action taken to tackle potential problems before they become concerns. Pupils are nurtured, and the care and support provided for them are excellent. Their personal development and well-being are outstanding. Parents appreciate the fact that, as one wrote, 'There is a keen awareness of the importance of developing the social skills of the children alongside delivering a good quality education.' Pupils are lively and responsive in class, and thoughtful and reflective in assembly. They are considerate in their dealings with each other. The playground is a happy and harmonious area. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and the need to stay safe. They have a very mature understanding of their responsibility to the global, as well as local, community, including their school. They talk eagerly of their links with Ethiopia and the child they support. Pupils are very aware of contemporary environmental concerns and their excellent leadership, as well as their numeracy and literacy, skills provide a very good preparation for their future economic well-being.

Staff and governors know how well the school is doing. Targets set for future development are demanding, and the school thrives on challenge. Their self-evaluation is a little cautious but this is because they are so aware that they can always improve. As the 'Learning to Lead' project has shown, there is an excellent capacity for further improvement. New staff received a comprehensive induction for three days before they started at the school in September, enabling them to join the school feeling confident in what was expected of them. As a result, the transition has been seamless and highly effective. Community cohesion is promoted exceptionally effectively, not just through the 'Learning to Lead' project, but also through the very strong links forged with the local community and those created on a more national and global scale. The school uses data exceptionally well to check its performance and the robust monitoring system ensures that the quality of teaching and learning is rigorously evaluated. Teachers are mutually supportive. The school improvement plan is meticulous, and is a vital constituent in the concerted efforts to drive this school forward. As parents wrote, 'The school is superb. The staff are enthusiastic, the pupils confident and well motivated and the headteacher knows all the children and their parents, which is great.'

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enter the Reception class at a level that is broadly as expected for their age but with a wide variety of skills within this. They make excellent progress and they join Year 1 having reached above average standards. Children are keen to learn because an exciting range of activities is provided across all areas of the EYFS curriculum. There is an excellent balance between those activities led by adults and those that children choose for themselves. The grounds are used most imaginatively to stimulate and promote their learning, and learning flows freely between the indoor and outside environments. The classroom is bright and exciting and provides an inviting atmosphere. The teaching is animated and moves at a good pace. Excellent support is provided by the teaching assistant. The care and attention given to children's welfare is extremely good. The monitoring of children's progress is rigorous and action is taken to provide good additional support where it is needed. The leadership and management of the EYFS and the support provided for the teaching is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the excitement and creativity of the core curriculum is fully established in all subjects taught.

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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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	1

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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	1

The quality of provision

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

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 eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

11 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Baltonsborough Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School,
Glastonbury, BA6 8PX

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. It was good to hear how much you enjoy your work and all the extra activities in which you are involved, particularly the 'Learning to Lead' project. There was nothing you wanted to change about your school and you thought it gave you an excellent education. We agree with you. It most certainly does!

- These are the things we liked best:
- Your behaviour is excellent and you are really keen and enthusiastic about your learning.
- You are all doing very well in English, mathematics and science and in many other subjects as well.
- The 'Learning to Lead' project gives you lots of opportunities to take responsibility for a wide range of initiatives in your school and the wider community.
- You told us, and again we agree, that teachers make learning interesting and fun for you, and you know how to improve your work from marking and target setting.
- The teachers and staff take excellent care of you while you are in school.
- Your headteacher and governors lead the school extremely well and are very keen to make it even better.

There is only one small area that could be a little better:

- The school is developing a new curriculum and it is already very exciting, particularly in English, mathematics and science. We have asked your school to make sure that this excitement and creativity becomes fully established across all subjects.

You can help your school to achieve this by continuing to tell your teachers what really motivates and stimulates you to learn. We are glad you enjoy your school and hope you will continue to work hard.

Very best wishes

Yours faithfully

Mrs Christine Huard Lead inspector