

# Bratton Fleming School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113137
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	338103
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jonathan Palk HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	92
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Val Worms
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Susan Denham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 September 2006
<b>School address</b>	Station Rd Bratton Fleming Barnstaple EX31 4SB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and a parent. They observed the school's work, and looked at documentation, including the school improvement plan, governors' minutes, pupil surveys, the tracking of pupils' progress, examples of pupils' work, individual education plans of a proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, documents relating to safeguarding and community cohesion, minutes of governors' meetings and 68 parental questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- standards and achievement in writing and mathematics
- the quality of teaching and learning
- how effectively the curriculum meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation stage
- the ability of managers at all levels to drive improvement.

## Information about the school

Bratton Fleming School is a small village primary school. The pupils are mainly from White British backgrounds and all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The headteacher has been in post since November 2007. This followed an unsettled period in the school's history. The school was awarded the Award for Sport in April, Healthy School Plus status in June, the Silver Travel Plan in July and International School Status in August of this year.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

In the view of inspectors, parents, staff and pupils, the school has been transformed over the last two years. The headteacher, through her inspiring and tireless leadership, has brought the school and community back to the heart of the village. Staff and governors have tackled decisively the shortcomings in the provision for those in the Early Years Foundation Stage, using a blend of the headteacher's expertise and additional training provided by the local authority. The curriculum has undergone a complete overhaul. The parents frequently made comments such as, 'For such a small school, the opportunities are amazing.' The impact of this has been to re-energise staff and motivate pupils, who really enjoy their experiences at school. There has been an upward shift in teachers' expectations and whilst this has not yet been enough to ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress, teaching is satisfactory with some good features that are being built upon. The use by teachers of assessment information is not fully developed and more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by the expectations set for them. Standards in pupils' work have risen in Key Stage 1 for two consecutive years; this is also true of attainment in reading across the school, as a consequence of improved provision. The gap has started to close for the lower attaining pupils and more are reaching average standards by the end of Year 6. Progress and attainment in writing and mathematics, though average, still lag behind where they should be. In particular, some of the more able pupils in Key Stage 2 are not consistently achieving as well as they should.

The school has built a good capacity for sustained development. The school knows itself well and the headteacher, along with experienced staff, has managed change skilfully, ensuring that all staff are on board. Middle leaders are becoming more adept at using a wider range of indicators to measure the impact of the action taken to improve the school, although success criteria are too general.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress made by the more able pupils in writing and mathematics by ensuring that the expectations are well matched to their needs.
- Extend the good elements of teaching and learning by:
- ensuring that there is greater clarity for pupils about the expected outcomes in lessons and these are referred to when teachers give feedback to pupils
- effective use is made of probing questions to challenge pupils' understanding and raise expectations in the majority of lessons.
- Embed the use of sharper and more measurable success criteria in development

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plans, so that the impact of improvements can be evaluated.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1, and performance data, including this year's unvalidated results, show that for the last three years, standards have been above average. A systematic focus on reading and mathematics development and good support for those at risk of falling behind has contributed to this improvement. Current and past information about Key Stage 2 shows that, while achievement is satisfactory and attainment is average overall, there are variations in the achievement of different groups and between subjects. Well-considered use is now made of resources to boost less able pupils' learning and strengthen key skills. As a consequence, reading results have continued to improve steadily and progress is now good for very nearly all pupils. The school has recently adopted a systematic approach to the craft of writing, and a strong emphasis on speaking and listening skills through discussion and role-play has helped pupils to develop their ideas, language and vocabulary. The less able pupils and more reluctant writers are well supported but not enough high-quality feedback is given to more able pupils to reflect higher expectations. Increased practical work in science has sustained some good outcomes for most pupils, but in mathematics there is not enough challenge in the application of computation skills for the more able learners.

Pupils have a very good understanding of their own personal conduct and behaviour. Sometimes they let each other down with their behaviour when in larger groups and this is something pupils identify as the only weak feature of the school. Pupils show resilience when asked to work independently, and respond well to teachers' questions, particularly where these really probe their thinking and understanding. Very strong relationships have been established with all the adults in the school and pupils are treated with respect. They know that their views are valued and that they can receive support and extra help whenever they need it. In lessons, pupils think and learn for themselves. They show a high level of interest in all they do at school and pupils of all ages show responsibility and initiative. They really enjoy learning and the opportunity to learn with each other. When pupils are asked to work together, they do so very effectively, challenging and praising each other. Projects and thematic work are well planned to develop their skills and build on their interests. The chance to meet and work with people outside the school adds a further stimulus for good learning.

Pupils feel secure and appreciated because they are treated as individuals. They told inspectors that there are few incidents of bullying and if that if this occurred, it would be dealt with effectively. Vulnerable pupils are made to feel special at this school, through a flexible approach to the curriculum.

Pupils have an extremely positive view about how to stay healthy and particularly enjoy the wide range of sports on offer. Many stay for after-school sport, music or environmental clubs. The school council and eco-warriors take their role seriously, knowing that it helps make the school a better place. For example, they have harnessed pupils' enthusiasm for healthy activity through their work to improve the outdoor learning areas, playtimes, snack times and canteen services. School meals take-up has

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climbed by more than 20% in the last year. Pupils frequently add suggestions on how the school can be healthier and these are taken seriously.

Pupils' understanding of the contribution they make to the local community is very strong. They are well on the journey towards a greater understanding of young people's lives in Europe and beyond through their links with other schools. Their understanding of contemporary British society is less well developed than it might be.

Attendance is average after a dip last year due to absence for medical reasons. There are some good procedures to improve attendance.

The secure standards reached by pupils in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, combined with their keen appetite for teamwork and their enthusiasm for learning, prepare them well for their transition to the next stage of their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

Much work has been undertaken through in-service training and building partnerships with other schools to improve the provision. There is greater consistency about the

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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strong features of teaching throughout the school. These include a clear focus on the learning at the start of the lesson and the use of the final part of the lesson to help pupils draw together all they have learned. Lessons are engaging, with a good balance of practical activities, discussion and group working. As a consequence, pupils work well as a class and in small groups. The steady pace of lessons helps less able pupils to keep up and these pupils are well supported by knowledgeable teaching assistants. Resources are used well and are of good quality, and teachers' good use of interactive whiteboards helps to enrich the learning experience.

Not all lessons sufficiently match work to the higher ability pupils and for these the pace of the lesson can be too slow. Equally, the intended outcomes for this group are not very different from those set for the whole class and this means that these pupils are not always suitably challenged. Marking is improving, since it was noted as a weakness during a recent monitoring visit by Ofsted, but is still inconsistent. The targets set to improve pupils' writing are not challenging enough. Generally, teachers have a good range of strategies to keep the learning moving forward but miss opportunities to use questions to challenge and offer feedback to pupils.

The curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of interesting experiences. Trips, events and visits all serve to widen horizons and inspire ambition. The use of an innovative curriculum model ensures the curriculum is imaginative and stimulating, whilst addressing the systematic acquisition of key skills. Well-planned links across subjects are enriched through a programme of creative days and speciality weeks. The good quality opportunities in learning outdoors are a strength of the school. A strong emphasis on pupil involvement is helping to develop sustained concentration, perseverance and the ability of pupils to evaluate their own work. Pupils say, 'Learning is fun'. Some recent opportunities exist for gifted and talented pupils, particularly in mathematics and science, but these are not evident in day-to-day planning. Pupils are involved in responding to the evaluation of the curriculum through questionnaires and this has led to the school's involvement in the junior sports leadership programme for those pupils who find traditional physical education programmes unengaging.

Staff know pupils very well and parents are appreciative of the level of care offered by the school. There is exceptionally sensitive support for those who are particularly vulnerable and those with specific social, emotional and physical needs.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

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## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides tremendous inspiration and motivation for all the school community. This has ensured that good progress has been made in improving aspects of provision and promoting equality since the last inspection. As a result, the youngest pupils make good progress, and pupils' personal development and well-being and care have improved. Open and honest discussion about development is embedding into the culture of the school and sustained by the attention given to professional development for all staff.

The school shows a strong commitment to promoting cohesion within and outside the school community. Pupils show pride in their school in the way they work and play together. The school has a good understanding of its own community through its strong links within the village and local schools. It has been quick to extend the opportunities for the largely monocultural experiences of pupils by establishing links with pupils in schools in other parts of the world.

There is good quality monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher and local authority advisers. Lesson observations are well focused on agreed areas of school improvement. Weaknesses in teaching are identified and support is given, and this helps to improve the quality of learning. The use of data is developing well and is used to pinpoint where the main emphasis for support needs to be targeted. However, the routine use of data by all managers is at an early stage. Measurable targets are not widely used as success criteria in the school's improvement plans. The school makes good use of surveys to capture pupils' and parents' views.

Safeguarding procedures are extremely robust and systematic in implementation. Risk assessments are detailed and pupils and parents are very positive about safety in general. Improvements to transition arrangements and good links made with play groups and the secondary school help sustain pupils' good personal development and well-being. Governors have formed an effective partnership with staff to enable them to monitor subjects but are not yet fully involved at a strategic level in evaluating school improvement. They actively seek feedback from parents, and expenditure has been well managed to push forward the school's priorities. The sound outcomes for pupils, coupled with efficient resource allocation, demonstrate satisfactory value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>



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<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The headteacher, governors and staff rapidly implemented improvements to the previously unsatisfactory provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The headteacher has successfully passed on to the teacher the important qualities for successful learning and development. This is evident in the above-expected rates of progress achieved by the children across all areas of their learning. Based on their starting points, outcomes for children are good. Last year's cohort of children started school with skills and abilities below those expected for their age in most areas of their learning. By the time they started Year 1, they were meeting expectations in the six areas of learning. Children are happy, confident and enthusiastic learners. They are very much part of the school family. Progress in key skills is good because of effective teaching. Class teachers and skilled teaching assistants work as a very effective team to meet children's needs, and planning fully embraces the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. Children receive a good balance of adult-led activities and those they choose for themselves. The free flow of activities between indoor and outdoor learning is well provided for and extremely well resourced. Day-to-day assessment is good, with planning adapted to meets the needs of children as a result of tracking and monitoring their progress. Decisions to create a distinctive setting have been supported with high-quality resources inside and out. The current strong focus on building links with pre-school groups is extremely useful in ensuring that as soon as children start in the Reception class, their experiences can be tailored to meet their needs.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

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## **Views of parents and carers**

The parents of 91% of the school population responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. Their responses show very high levels of satisfaction with the work of the school. The majority of the small numbers of parental criticisms were offered constructively, focusing on issues with individuals rather than the school as a whole. Parents responded particularly strongly to the impact of the headteacher on improving the curriculum and morale, and making it easier to communicate with staff. The strengthening links with the village community also found favour with parents. The comment by one parent about the care of pupils was typical of others: 'We are particularly impressed with the 'family' atmosphere and the mutual respect encouraged within the school. All ages seem to mix and interact well with each other.'

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bratton Fleming Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspector received 68 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 92 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	71	17	27	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	66	21	34	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	32	52	27	44	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	50	26	42	4	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	50	27	44	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	68	20	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	68	20	32	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	34	55	24	39	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	52	27	44	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	45	30	48	4	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	50	27	44	4	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	65	20	32	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	68	17	27	3	5	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

# Glossary

## What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

## Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



25 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bratton Fleming School, Barnstaple EX31 4SB

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We thoroughly enjoyed being in your lessons and meeting with you. We were particularly impressed by the enthusiasm you have for school. I enjoyed my stroll around the school with members of the school council, even if it was a little wet.

You and your parents are very positive about your school and we certainly agreed with the main points.

- The headteacher has done a wonderful job since arriving and is an exciting person to lead your school.
- The curriculum is much more inviting and you and your parents enjoy all the different ways you have to learn and to broaden your horizons.
- You like learning outdoors and meeting and learning about other people.
- You all are developing into responsible young people who have a good understanding of healthy eating and how to care for others and the environment.
- You behave well, and feel safe and well cared for.

The inspection team and the headteacher agree that although your school has made some good progress since we last visited, there is still plenty to do and we have asked that the school's leaders ensure that:

- more of you make faster progress in writing and mathematics
- the teaching is of at least good quality, for example by making clear to you exactly what you are expected to learn
- teachers and governors devise ways to check that the action they are taking to improve the school is having the desired effect.

I know you will continue to work hard and help each other to do your best. I wish you every success for the future.

Jonathan Palk

Her Majesty's Inspector

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