

The Bishop William Ward Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115144
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	357706
Inspection dates	23–24 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Roderick Passant

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 of pupils on the school roll	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Embleton
Headteacher	Lesley Walder
Date of previous school inspection	12 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed six lessons, seeing all five class teachers teaching their classes. They met with senior school managers, representatives from the governing body and a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils. They looked at a range of documentation, particularly relating to safeguarding and the school improvement plan. They also scrutinised questionnaire responses from 41 parents and carers, 57 pupils and 16 staff.

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

- How well the school's leadership is developing pupils' writing across the school and particularly with higher attaining pupils.
- The effect of the school's work in developing the creative curriculum.
- How successfully the school promotes pupils' cultural development.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than the average primary school and almost all pupils are White British heritage. There are a very few pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is less than generally seen although the percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is slightly above average. The school has gained Activemark, for its work in physical education and sports, and Healthy School status.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils achieve well and enjoy their work, making good progress academically and in their personal development. Pupils' attainment is securely above average by the end of Year 6. All parents who responded to the questionnaire judge their child as enjoying school and they were happy with their child's experience. Parents, in their comments speak about the school's warm and caring ethos, how the school fosters confidence and self esteem and the difference that attending this school has made to their child. The school provides outstanding care guidance and support to the pupils: they are known and valued as individuals. This is not simply the impact of its small size but is because the promotion of equal opportunities and inclusion are outstanding and fundamental to the school's philosophy. The school is an extremely inclusive and cohesive community.

The school helps pupils develop as young people well. They acquire respect, empathy and compassion for other people and an appreciation of beauty. They are also willing to consider big issues such as 'truth', 'love' and 'goodness'. They understand the rules of the school community and express their views with confidence knowing that they will be listened to. Overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, but cultural development is relatively weaker. Pupils feel extremely safe in school because they know that staff care about them. They also develop a good understanding of 'risk' and keeping themselves safe on the internet and elsewhere through such activities as Crucial Crew, an externally run programme teaching pupils about managing risks that young people might face. Pupils' behaviour is good.

Pupils think that what they do in lessons is interesting. This is because the school is very committed to ensuring that the curriculum provides vibrant learning opportunities. The school blocks subjects together in a creative way to make links in the learning. It holds a multi-cultural week, explores other faiths, and includes work on India and Kenya within the curriculum. There are also embryonic links with a Kenyan orphanage that the school is planning to build on. That said, the work on community cohesion is currently limited. The curriculum gives limited attention to the diverse nature of our society and the global dimension.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their work effectively to meet the wide range of needs in the mixed-age-classes. Teachers explain work clearly, but occasionally miss opportunities to allow pupils to make a greater contribution to their learning by demonstrating their initiative. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together, and teaching assistants have a clear understanding of their specific role and contribution in a lesson.

The school is led well by the headteacher. Teamwork across the school is strong and staff are very committed to improving the school. Self-evaluation is based on careful consideration of a range of data, including the results of parent and pupil surveys. The school knows itself well, its judgements are very accurate and its priorities for development, focused often on aspects of relative under-performance, are well-judged. Teaching, attainment and progress have improved since the last inspection. There is good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' progress by
 - planning more opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their initiative and take responsibility for aspects of their learning.
- Develop the national and global dimensions of community cohesion so that pupils' develop a broader view of the diversity of society in this country and greater awareness of the wider world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are keen and enthusiastic. They concentrate well, sticking to their task and generally work at a good rate. They cooperate well with others, sharing and rehearsing ideas with their talk partners. They are also confident enough to indicate if they do not fully understand something.

The unvalidated English results for 2010 show improvement in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level. Recent progress in reading is particularly good because there are wide ranging opportunities to read a variety of texts within the topic work. Writing also shows improvement because of the work in visual literacy and work on developing pupils' vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation. There are good opportunities for developing extended writing within the curriculum.

Pupils' progress is monitored and evaluated carefully so that the school identifies early pupils who are in danger of slipping behind. Three Year 6 pupils spoke warmly of the help that they received in their 'catch-up' programme. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because assessment data is considered carefully and discussed in depth with the class teacher at regular intervals. This means that the effectiveness of strategies used are assessed and other strategies are put in place if necessary, drawing on the expertise of outside specialists where appropriate. Pupils with specific behavioural difficulties learn to understand their feelings and emotions so that they can better manage their behaviour.

Higher attaining pupils are effectively challenged, reflected in the much higher than average proportion gaining the higher levels in the recent Year 6 tests. The number of pupils learning or relearning English after a very extensive period abroad is very small, but they too are making good progress.

Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of nutrition and the importance of

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

exercise. A large majority of pupils are keen to make healthy choices, for example two thirds of pupils use clubs to extend their physical activities to three hours a week. All parents and pupils responding to the questionnaires judged the school is helping pupils to make healthy choices and become healthy.

Although relatively early in the school year, Year 6 pupils demonstrate that they are confident articulate young people, keen and enthusiastic who enjoy learning. They are on track to attain above average academic skills and also have good information, communication technology skills. They are being prepared well for the next steps in their learning and the foundations for the future economic well-being are being laid well. Attendance is above average and is monitored carefully.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are presented in a lively enthusiastic manner that motivates the pupils and keeps them interested. Planning is detailed with activities providing both challenge and support to pupils so that their needs are met. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to give pupils more freedom in their learning, for example through more open

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

ended work where pupils themselves have to make a decision on what to do next. The aims of the lesson are shared with pupils so that they understand the point of the lesson and how it fits into what has happened before. Often the pupils are given the criteria to judge their work, which also gives them information about what to aim for and improve. Assessment is used well to check on pupils' understanding. Marking is often very detailed, indicating how pupils can improve their work. The large majority of pupils feel that they know how well they are doing in school. Staff use specialised assessment materials to verify their judgements and to identify the next steps needed for pupils to move on.

The curriculum continues to improve as the staff develop and refine it within a topic structure, exploiting the links between subjects in a creative manner so that pupils' interest is raised. It meets statutory requirements and provides a broad range of experiences. It includes good enrichment opportunities and includes a residential visit. The school uses trips and visitors well to extend pupils' learning experiences. The personal, social, health and citizenship elements support pupils' personal development well. Importantly the curriculum is underpinned by detailed planning to ensure progression in skills and to avoid repetition in the mixed age classes.

Pupils themselves say that they like the size of the school because they know everyone. Staff are vigilant, sensitive and highly supportive so that they make a significant difference to pupils facing some form of crisis or challenge in their lives, enabling them to get back on track within the classroom.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher sets high professional standards and has developed a strong team of staff who share her ambitions for the school and its pupils. Being a small school, staff have multiple leadership and management responsibilities and time is always at a premium. Nevertheless, a strong characteristic of the school is that staff are very reflective and consider carefully, as a group, how to improve its performance. The promotion of equality lies at the heart of the school's work and is validated through its rigorous assessment and sophisticated monitoring of data. The school improvement plan is supplemented by a termly raising attainment plan which targets initiatives over a shorter term. Both plans would benefit from sharper success criteria to judge the impact of initiatives.

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

Governance is good. The governing body gives clear support and asks challenging questions. It takes its wide-ranging responsibilities very seriously, providing the school with a clear strategic direction. Safeguarding is good because recruitment procedures and verification of health and safety routines are rigorous. All members of the governing body work closely with staff. As a result of their self-evaluation they have recently funded a higher level of clerking expertise to support their work. The governing body sees this as an important step in improving their work further.

The school knows its local community extremely well and has produced an action plan to develop community cohesion. It has extended its role within the local community recently and there are plans to extend its work in enhancing pupils' experiences of diversity. Racist incidents are extremely rare and pupils have a mature understanding of disability.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Reception year provides children with a good start to their formal education. Children demonstrate a full range of skills and aptitudes on entry, but in the recent past overall standards have been slightly below those expected for their age, particularly in early writing and number skills. Children make good progress, particularly in developing their confidence and very positive attitudes to learning. Currently, although the teacher is very new in her temporary post, teaching is good and ongoing assessment is used effectively to identify next steps for individual children. Children have made good progress in settling into classroom routines and expectations, although some still need gently reminding. Basic rules such as 'sharing' and 'taking turns' are reinforced in a

sensitive manner. The classroom and immediate outdoor area provide a stimulating environment with well planned activities. The potential of the wider school grounds is currently not exploited. Independence is encouraged well and behaviour is very good so children play and learn together well. There is strong team work. Adults have a calm manner and are quick to exploit learning opportunities through effective questioning and talking with individual children. The care and support they provide is good; welfare requirements are met and children feel safe and gain confidence quickly. There is evidence of good ongoing leadership since the new classroom was established. Currently the headteacher is maintaining oversight of development in the Reception Year whilst the leader is on maternity leave.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires returned is broadly average. All parents and carers indicated that their child enjoys school and that they are happy with their child's experience at this school. A few expressed concerns about the preparation for their future schools, the management of unacceptable behaviour and how the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. The school has a governor who serves on the governing body of the local secondary school to ensure good liaison and there is a visiting programme for Year 6 pupils. The school manages behaviour well in a consistent, positive fashion so that pupils learn to take responsibility for their actions. The governors survey parents' views annually and take these into account in drawing up the school development plan.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Bishop William Ward Church of England 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 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 41 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 133 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	71	12	29	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	83	7	17	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	22	54	15	37	3	7	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	44	21	51	1	2	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	23	56	17	41	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	46	19	46	0	0	3	7
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	20	49	21	51	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)	16	39	19	46	0	0	6	15
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	49	20	49	0	0	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	49	15	37	2	5	4	10
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	66	9	22	0	0	5	12
The school is led and managed effectively	22	54	16	39	2	5	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	66	14	34	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



27 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Bishop William Ward Church of England Primary School, Colchester, CO6 4AT

Thank you for making me so welcome in your school. I enjoyed my brief stay very much. I would like to thank particularly the Year 5 and 6 pupils who gave up part of their lunchtime to talk to me.

This is a good school. You make good progress in your work and by the end of Year 6 reach standards that are above those seen in many schools. The school also helps you develop as young people well, providing you with outstanding care and guidance and support. This is reflected in your questionnaires, where you indicated that you feel safe in school and that adults care about you. You behave well in and around the school; often you behave extremely well. It is not often that an ice-cream seller takes the trouble to ring a school to compliment it on the behaviour of its pupils, as happened last week following Year 1, 2 and 3 pupils' trip to the seaside! Year 6 pupils told me that the work they did in school was interesting and fun. I agree with you. You have skilled teachers; they plan their lessons carefully and check thoroughly that you are making good progress. The headteacher and her team lead the school well. They have a clear idea of the school's strengths and how they wish to make it even better. I asked the headteacher to work with staff to improve two aspects of their work. There are times when teachers could plan for you to make an even greater contribution to your lesson so that you can show just how clever you are! I also asked that there should be even more emphasis in the topics that you are studying on how other people live and their cultures.

The school has improved since it was last inspected. The staff are ambitious for the school and want you to do as well as you can. You can help the school improve even further by continuing to work hard and enjoying learning as much as you do at present.

Yours sincerely

Roderick Passant

Lead inspector

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