

# Bentley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124754
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	359761
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Nick Butt

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>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	45
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Rev Don Mehan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Joanne Austin (Executive headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Church Road Bentley Ipswich
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 310253
<b>Fax number</b>	01473 313152
<b>Email address</b>	ad.bentley.p@talk21.com

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## **Introduction**

This inspection was carried out by an additional inspector. The inspector visited eight lessons and observed three teachers. He held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and a group of pupils. He observed the school's work and looked at a selection of documentation, including planning, evidence of monitoring such as lesson observations, and analyses of pupils' work and other assessment information. The inspector scrutinised inspection questionnaires returned by 16 parents and carers, and by staff and pupils.

The inspector reviewed many aspects of the school's work. He looked in detail at the following.

- Whether more able pupils are being sufficiently challenged to reach the higher levels of attainment.
- The effectiveness of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage as part of a mixed age class.
- The impact of the partnership with another local primary school on outcomes for pupils, especially in terms of the school's capacity for sustained improvement.

## **Information about the school**

Bentley is much smaller than the average sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has Healthy Schools status and the Activemark award.

The school entered into partnership with a nearby outstanding primary school in September 2010, sharing an executive headteacher, and recruiting a part-time deputy headteacher from the partner school. There are two classes in the school, one containing Reception children and Years 1 and 2; the other containing pupils in Years 3 to 6.

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

## Inspection judgements

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

**3**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Bentley is a satisfactory school. The school has entered an exciting phase in its development with new leadership and the benefits of partnership with another local primary school. In a short time, the outstanding leadership of the executive headteacher has built a highly committed and united team focused on bringing about rapid improvement. While it is too early to see impact in terms of improved test results, systems have already been put in place that enable teachers to analyse data in depth and identify those pupils at risk of falling behind. The new deputy headteacher has introduced a curriculum that helps pupils to acquire skills in an incremental manner, and which is also creative and relevant to their needs. This has had a marked impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and their enjoyment of school. Outstanding attendance has been maintained. A focus on showing pupils how they can improve through setting challenging targets has motivated them and given them clear personal goals for improvement. The school's adoption of a programme of personal skills for learning success is enabling pupils to begin to develop the qualities they need to become independent learners. All these steps for improvement arise out of the skilful and precise self-evaluation undertaken by leaders and managers, which gives a very clear view of areas for development.

Parents and carers have commented favourably on the changes being introduced, and can see the difference in their children. One, speaking for many, said, 'We have been very impressed with the changes already introduced by the headteacher in her first few weeks. Our children have always enjoyed going to Bentley School and are doing well, but we are now confident that they will actually be able to achieve their full potential.' Staff have welcomed the clear leadership and sense of direction the new team has brought to the school, building on existing strengths and adding purpose and drive. Opportunities to share good practice have been introduced with the partner school and good leadership of teaching and learning has promoted professional development and staff accountability. Staff have recently been given more measurable targets for performance management so that they can tell how well they are meeting them. The school continues to care well for its pupils, something that was a strength at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are known as individuals and all staff help and support them, whatever their particular needs.

Attainment is broadly average and pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points, although there is evidence of more rapid progress emerging in Years 3 to 6. Too few pupils in each year group attain the higher levels because more able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged, and there is inconsistency around how well pupils understand what they have to do to improve. Teaching is satisfactory. There are some

good elements, especially in the Key Stage 2 class, where pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their learning. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, too much of the activity is led by adults, and children do not make enough choices for themselves. The focus of planning tends to be on what children are doing, rather than on what they will learn from their activity.

The governing body has shown imagination and initiative in seeking a dynamic solution to its quest for a headteacher. It supports the leadership team well. Monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous or systematic, however. In view of the remarkable renaissance in the school's development since the start of the school year, with positive impact in several important areas, the capacity for sustained improvement is good.

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

- Ensure that more pupils in each year group attain the higher levels by:
  - sufficiently challenging all pupils, and especially the more able
  - ensuring all pupils know the next steps in their learning for improvement
  - encouraging pupils to become independent learners.
- Build on initiatives that harness the staff's enthusiasm to improve the provision by:
  - sharing best practice across the partnership of schools
  - promoting individuals' professional development through measurable performance management targets and coaching.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
  - having a better balance between those activities guided by adults and those chosen by children
  - ensuring planning focuses on the outcomes for children's learning.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve best when they are actively involved. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were intrigued to receive a letter from a mother dragon asking them to look after her baby. This led them to explore the school garden for 'dragon food'. Older pupils took on the challenge of solving real-life problems to find out about fractions. One pupil concluded afterwards, 'Fractions are not as scary as I thought they were!' The school is encouraging pupils to develop personal skills for learning success, such as 'not giving up', 'pushing yourself' and 'trying new things'. These motivate them in class and help to focus them on improving their performance and reflecting upon how well they are doing.

Children join Reception with a range of skills and abilities that are usually broadly in line with expectations. Their progress is satisfactory in the Early Years Foundation Stage and

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Key Stage 1, and increasingly good in Key Stage 2. The attainment of pupils by the end of Year 6 is broadly average, although a below average proportion attain the higher levels. This is because work is not always challenging enough for the more able pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate support to make satisfactory progress, although it is only recently that the school has started to measure the impact of specific interventions.

Pupils say they feel safe at school and have a good understanding of managing risk. They take cycling training and know how to cope in an emergency, such as in the event of a fire. They make a good range of healthy choices, with a high uptake of school meals. This is evidenced by the award of Healthy Schools status and the Activemark. All pupils go swimming for two terms of the year, and they take plenty of exercise. Pupils play an active role in supporting the school community and are involved in village life, such as taking part in the annual Remembrance Day ceremony. During the inspection, pupils marked European Languages Day by entertaining parents, carers and the community by singing in French at a fundraising event to support a national charity. Pupils' behaviour is good, reflecting their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have established good links with their counterparts in the partner school. The school equips them satisfactorily for secondary school, and recent changes mean pupils are beginning to develop the skills and confidence they need to do well.

*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>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1

<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.

**The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development****2****How effective is the provision?**

Good relationships between adults and pupils mean pupils are keen to learn. They are enthusiastic about the practical activities they undertake, such as programming robotic toys to find a dragon's nest. Expectations of learning are not always made clear to them, which can lead to some loss of focus when they are working independently. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 know their levels, and marking shows them what they have to do to improve. This good practice is not so well established in every year group. Teachers use data appropriately to assess how well pupils are doing and to plan work that meets their needs, although sometimes work is too easy for the more able pupils. The revised curriculum is at an early stage of development, but pupils have responded well to its topic-based approach. They are enjoying the work on World War II, which gives them opportunities to write at length across a range of subjects. There is a satisfactory range of clubs and visits to enrich the curriculum, including a residential journey with pupils from the partner school.

The school has excellent procedures to promote attendance, which keep absence to a minimum, for example by reducing the incidence of term-time holidays. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is satisfactory, although targets on individual education plans are not specific enough. The school provides good pastoral care, ensuring pupils who may be vulnerable flourish, and engaging well with outside agencies who offer support and advice.

*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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The executive headteacher's drive and ambition for the school have fired the imagination of staff and rallied the governing body and the local community. Much has been achieved in a short time, with improvements to pupils' motivation and enjoyment of school, and a culture of high expectation established. The deputy headteacher has ensured that the leadership and management of teaching and learning is effective, working alongside staff, and that the new curriculum is being implemented successfully. It is too soon to see measured growth in attainment or progress, but rigorous systems have been put in place to ensure that self-evaluation procedures are robust and all staff

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held accountable for pupils' performance.

The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory, having steered the school smoothly through a period of transition as the partnership was being set up. However, the governing body's monitoring activity is not focused enough on key priorities for improvement, or recorded systematically. The school promotes equality satisfactorily, ensuring that all pupils are included well, but there are inconsistencies in the provision for more able pupils and for those in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Good policies and procedures ensure that safeguarding arrangements are secure, with all training completed and effective record-keeping. Risk assessments are particularly thorough. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily, having undertaken an initial audit of its community and taking a full and active part in village life. It is developing links with a school in France, and has a longstanding relationship with a school in San Salvador. The very positive partnership with another local primary school is giving pupils the opportunity to benefit from a wide range of experiences and make new friends.

*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	2
<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>3</b>
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children's progress is satisfactory as they settle quickly into the mixed Reception and Key Stage 1 class. They benefit from free access to a well-resourced and spacious outside area, and a canopy that enables them to work outdoors in all weathers. However, too much of the learning is adult-led with not enough child-initiated activity. This reduces children's ability to make choices and develop independence. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some imaginative planning capturing children's interest,



such as the work on dragons. Children particularly enjoyed making dragon glove puppets out of socks. At times, staff planning focuses too much on what pupils are going to do rather than on what learning is intended to derive from the activity. Appropriate assessments are made, and these are recorded in learning journals. Children reach standards appropriate for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory, with realistic self-evaluation and a strong team spirit.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

## **Views of parents and carers**

Parents and carers express overwhelmingly positive views about the school. They welcome the changes introduced by the new leadership team and can see the benefits for their children of the partnership arrangements. All parents and carers who responded agreed that their children enjoyed school and were safe. A few expressed concerns about more able pupils being sufficiently challenged, a weakness also identified by the inspector.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bentley Church of England Voluntary Controlled 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 16 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 45 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	8	50	8	50	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	8	50	8	50	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	1	6	14	88	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	0	0	14	88	0	0	1	6
The teaching is good at this school	3	19	11	69	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	4	25	11	69	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	5	31	10	63	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)	0	0	11	69	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	2	13	11	69	0	0	1	6
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	4	25	10	63	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	2	13	10	63	0	0	1	6
The school is led and managed effectively	5	31	9	56	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	5	31	9	56	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](http://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"> <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.**



27 September 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bentley Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Ipswich,  
IP9 2BT

Thank you for making me welcome when I visited your school recently and sharing your views with me. Bentley is a satisfactory school. There are a number of strengths.

You behave well and look after one another.

You have a good understanding of how to keep safe and stay healthy.

You contribute well to the school community and take a full and active part in village life.

Your attendance is outstanding.

The school cares for you well, especially if you are having difficulties.

The school's new leaders have made a very good start at improving things.

The partnership with a nearby primary school is working well.

I particularly enjoyed the concert you gave to mark European Languages Day, when so many of your parents, carers and friends came to enjoy coffee and cake and raise money for charity. This shows how important your school is to the village.

In order for the school to get even better I have recommended the following things.

I have asked teachers to make sure that the work challenges you so that more of you reach high levels of attainment.

I have asked teachers to show you how to improve and encourage you to make more choices about your own learning.

I have suggested teachers share with one another what they do best and think about how they can help you to learn even faster.

I have asked that children in Reception have more time to choose their own activities as well as be guided by the adults.

You all can help by telling your teachers what you enjoy about your learning and making suggestions for new things to find out about. My best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt

Lead inspector

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