

Menu

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number	131188
Local Authority	HERTFORDSHIRE LA
Inspection number	315745
Inspection date	21 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Susan Aldridge

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (school)	446
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2005

School address	High Street
Bovingdon, Hemel Hempstead	
Hertfordshire HP3 0HL	
Telephone number	01442 406545
Fax number	01442 406548
Chair	Mrs Sally Whalley
Headteacher	Mr Martin Mangan

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the progress made by pupils in their time at the school, whether standards are exceptionally high in any areas of the curriculum, and how well the school's provision meets the needs of the most able and least able pupils. Evidence was gathered from data and documents supplied by the school, discussions with governors, staff and pupils and direct observation of teaching and learning. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but there was no evidence found to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Description of the school

Bovingdon Primary is a much larger than average school. Most of the pupils are of White British heritage. There are few from minority ethnic groups and very few who are learning to speak English. The proportion eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills typical of their age, although this varies from year to year. The school provides before and after school care, as well as holiday clubs, as part of its extended school provision. Its work has been recognised by a number of awards, including Eco Schools Green Flag, ICT Mark, Healthy Schools and the Activemark Gold Sports Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Bovingdon Primary is an outstanding school that thoroughly deserves its good reputation locally. It is exceptionally well led and managed and so it provides an excellent quality of education and care for its pupils. As a result of this, pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points to reach exceptionally high standards in reading, speaking and listening and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils of all abilities make similar progress because the school challenges and extends the most able and provides high quality support for those who occasionally find learning difficult. Parents are delighted with what the school provides. One comment reflected well the views of many. 'The staff work really hard to ensure that lessons are enjoyable. The school is professionally run but still provides a caring environment in which the children flourish.'

Pupils' excellent progress is linked to teaching that is often outstanding and never less than good. Leaders and governors regularly observe lessons to ensure that the school's policy is being implemented faithfully and to identify areas for improvement. Teachers are very well supported in developing their skills, and members of the leadership team take a keen interest in research and national developments to ensure that no stone is left unturned in their quest for excellence. Teachers are innovative and have developed some aspects of their practice to a very high standard. In particular, they have forged a most successful partnership with pupils in the learning process so that pupils are exceptionally well informed about their work. They know their targets, are skilled in evaluating their work against set criteria, and teachers and pupils have a regular ongoing dialogue through the marking of work. In this way, pupils' successes are acknowledged and they learn from their mistakes. Their skills as independent learners are developed well, by researching history topics using the Internet, for example. Staff have excellent skills in the use of ICT to support learning. They use interactive whiteboards imaginatively and make regular use of short video clips to bring learning to life. High expectations are evident in the excellent curriculum provision for ICT. Pupils in Year 6 acquire skills normally taught in secondary schools. They learn to make animations, design web pages and make 3-dimensional models with the help of computers. Pupils in Year 2 are able to make multi-media presentations.

Reading skills are well above average, because the school has most effective strategies for developing this skill, including the systematic teaching of phonics and a good range of arrangements for supporting pupils who find it difficult to read. Parent volunteers provide effective support, giving certain pupils additional opportunities to read with an adult. High expectations of staff are evident in their accountability for the progress made by pupils in their care. Challenging targets are set, and often exceeded, and ICT is used effectively to follow and check up on the progress pupils are making. Any pupils who are not making good progress are quickly identified and they are given suitable support. Analysis of assessment information has enabled the school to see that standards in writing and mathematics, while above average, are not as high as those in reading. Suitable action has been taken and recent assessments indicate that progress in these areas has accelerated. Standards in writing have improved steadily over the past four years, for example, and pupils are on track to achieve their challenging targets in both writing and mathematics this year.

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their huge enjoyment of school is well reflected in excellent attendance in school and at extra-curricular clubs, exemplary behaviour and very good relationships. Staff provide very good role models in their dealings with pupils, who respond well by showing respect for them and their fellow pupils. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to shine and to be rewarded, so they grow in self-confidence. They feel safe and well cared for as the care and support provided are outstanding. Pupils say that they often feel proud of themselves at school, although they are not at all arrogant. All pupils learn to play an instrument and there is a thriving choir and an orchestra. Those who have particular gifts or talents have good opportunities to develop these further through links with secondary schools. Pupils are proud to represent their school when performing for others or participating in competitive sports. Points are awarded for acts of honesty, kindness

and consideration as well as for good work so pupils have a well developed sense of right and wrong. Their manners are excellent. Well established and keenly anticipated residential school journeys provide enjoyable opportunities for older pupils to develop independence skills, challenge themselves physically and widen their horizons. Pupils have an excellent knowledge and understanding of healthy lifestyles and they make healthy choices at school, particularly those who select the nutritious lunches prepared on the premises. They know perfectly well how to keep themselves safe too. There are many varied opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and they carry these out conscientiously. The work of the Eco-council has a high profile and gives pupils a heightened awareness of the importance of the environment and its sustainability. Pupils are tolerant of differences and thoughtful in their fundraising for less fortunate people. The school council gives pupils a very strong voice that is heard and acted upon. Governors analyse the questionnaires given to pupils and take careful note of what they say. For example, pupils' ideas for developing a sports pitch in the grounds have been incorporated into the school's long-term plan. Pupils learn most effectively how to work with and get along with others and because their basic skills are so well developed they are exceptionally well prepared for secondary school.

Although the school was judged outstanding at its last inspection, there is no hint of complacency and development has continued apace with enthusiasm and commitment. There have been significant improvements to the staffing, accommodation and resources, particularly in ICT. There is a high quality learning environment that celebrates pupils' achievements and includes eye-catching displays of pupils' art and design and technology work. Staff work exceptionally well as a team under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, leadership team and governors. Self-evaluation is wide ranging, incisive and accurate so it enables the school to see precisely where it needs to improve further. As a result, the school has an outstanding capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage, which is well led and managed. Parents say that children soon settle and they are pleased with the progress they are making. Good teaching ensures that children make good progress from their starting points. They are carefully assessed on entry and good use is made of this information to plan a wide range of learning opportunities across all the areas of learning. The balance of activities and the support provided is varied well according to the needs of pupils. For instance, lots of opportunities for developing fine motor skills, such as cutting, are provided if these are found to be less well developed. Children who find reading difficult benefit from the help of parent volunteers. Planning is good, and there is a good balance between activities led by adults and those selected by children. Assessment sheets are used well to note when pupils have demonstrated a skill in a chosen activity. Staff use records effectively to see whether any children need extra support and the school identifies early any children who find learning more difficult. The indoor environment is well organised and resourced. The school identified the need to improve the provision for outdoor play. A start has been made to remodel and improve the playground, although this was not complete at the time of the inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Complete the improvements to the provision for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage to widen the range of learning opportunities.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate		School Overall
Overall effectiveness		
How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	
Achievement and standards		
How well do learners achieve?	1	
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1
1 Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.	
Personal development and well-being	
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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 the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

22 April 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bovingdon Primary School, Bovingdon, Hertfordshire. HP3 0HL

Thank you all for making me so welcome at your school. I thoroughly enjoyed my day there. A special thanks to all of you who showed me your work and talked to me about school life.

I agree with the staff and governors that your school is outstanding. The teaching is excellent. This enables you to make outstanding progress in reading, speaking and listening, and ICT. Your achievements in ICT are very impressive. The school

has a very pleasant atmosphere because you behave so well, especially in lessons and assembly. The pupils I talked to all said that they feel safe in school and that they would turn to adults in school if they needed help. Above all, it was good to hear how much you enjoy school and lessons. You know your targets, older pupils check their work to see how well it matches up to what teachers expect and you respond to teacher's comments when they mark your work. These are helping you to make excellent progress, and the high standards that you reach will help you to succeed at secondary school.

You are developing very well as young people. You certainly make healthy choices at school and know very well how to keep yourselves safe. You also have great opportunities to develop your interests and talents, particularly in music. There are many ways in which you take on responsibilities at school and contribute to the wider community, especially through your Eco-council. Several of you told me that you often feel proud of yourselves because the staff have lots of ways of recognising and rewarding good qualities as well as good work.

The staff know exactly what they need to do to make your school even better, and the governors certainly listen to your ideas about this. I have asked the staff to complete the work that has already started to improve the outdoor area in the Foundation Stage. I wish you all well, and hope that you will keep up the good work!

Mrs S Aldridge

Lead inspector

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.



Parent View
Learner View

Employer View

Data View