

Bembridge Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118181
Local Authority	Isle of Wight
Inspection number	291043
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	147
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr A Menniss
Headteacher	Mrs T Baker
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2002
School address	Steyne Road Bembridge PO35 5UH
Telephone number	01983 872668
Fax number	01983 873976

Age group	4–9
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This smaller than average primary school draws pupils from the local village and the surrounding rural area. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The pupils predominantly come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. The number of pupils who enter or leave the school other than in Years 1 or 4 is above average for a school of this size. The school has the Healthy School Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides its pupils with a good standard of education. It has outstanding features in the leadership and management of the headteacher, the personal development and well-being of pupils, and in the care, support and guidance for pupils. The school works very closely with parents, and with a wide range of external agencies and other schools to promote pupils' education, personal development, well-being and care. 'The adults care for us lots', said one boy. These factors help to explain the above average academic standards and good achievement levels of pupils.

Senior leaders identified a need to improve the satisfactory Foundation Stage. Changes to the curriculum, the external area, and in the teaching of phonics, are now impacting positively and children are demonstrating improved levels of progress. However it is too early to assess the full impact of these changes. Pupils have entered Year 1 with the expected levels of knowledge and skills for their age. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards that are well above average. This good progress continues and many pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4 with knowledge and skills that are above the expected levels for their age.

Good teaching contributes significantly to the good progress of pupils. The pupils said, 'The teachers really try to make lessons fun', and explained that this is done through the use of 'games and lots of challenges'. Assessment data is used well to identify the next steps in pupils' learning, and also to identify any additional support that may be required. There are particularly good arrangements for pupils to review work that they have not fully understood, to practise, and to catch-up. However there are some inconsistencies in teachers' marking because it is not always linked to pupils' targets for improvement. Consequently some pupils are not fully able to use this information to help them evaluate and improve their work. The good curriculum challenges and motivates pupils, but parents who commented that there are insufficient extra-curricular activities for Year 1 pupils are correct.

The leadership and management of the school are good, and have contributed significantly to the improvements made, for example in information and communication technology, since the last inspection. In particular, the systems for monitoring, evaluating and identifying appropriate areas for development are outstanding. All staff and governors attend an annual one-day conference on school improvement. This, together with a more formal cycle of targeted school visits is enabling the governors to add significantly to their knowledge of the school. There is a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that teachers' marking consistently refers to pupils' targets and reinforces the next steps in their learning.
- Extend the extra-curricular opportunities for pupils in Year 1.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter Reception with skills and knowledge that broadly meet the expectations for their age. There are weaknesses in calculation and writing which are being addressed effectively. Current assessment data suggests that many children are now making good progress, particularly in linking of sounds and letters, and personal development.

By the end of Year 2, pupils consistently achieve well and attain above average standards. Some pupils make very good progress and, in the 2006 tests standards were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics. By the time pupils leave in Year 4 many are working at above expected levels, reflecting continuing good progress. Pupils behave well and their academic achievement reflects their positive attitudes. As one pupil said, 'The best thing about school is work. I love literacy.'

The good tracking systems in place enable pupils requiring additional support, including 'catch-up' opportunities, to be quickly identified. This helps to explain the good progress of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Pupils respond very well to the good opportunities they have to reflect on various issues, including Christian values, such as respect and responsibilities. They thoroughly enjoy their education; laughter and smiles being common factors during the school day. The school works hard to improve attendance which remains satisfactory. The pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay healthy and keep safe. This is not just the result of the various visitors into the school, like the police, who talk about safety. It is also results from the school being very effective in reinforcing messages about healthy living and keeping safe throughout the curriculum. In history for example, whilst studying the Great Fire of London, pupils learn about the dangers of fire and relate it to the role of the fire brigade today. Links to the community are particularly strong; pupils are involved in the church, and raise money for charities, such as the local lifeboat station. Links abroad are strong. Pupils email another school in France, whilst there are other links with Montserrat. Good standards in basic skills helps ensure that pupils are well prepared for their future life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Learning and teaching are good. Monitoring by managers is contributing to the maintenance of good teaching. In Reception there is evidence of improved teaching and learning resulting in improving standards. Teachers establish some bright and stimulating learning environments, which include valuable guidance to pupils through the 'learning boards'. Assessment data is used well to plan work that meets the learning needs of pupils. The use of interactive whiteboards and other good visual aids also enable pupils with different learning styles to achieve well. In particular there is good use of small whiteboards, and 'talk partners' which challenge pupils to think and comment on their work. Whilst teachers mark regularly and give very supportive comments, there are inconsistencies in the extent to which pupils' targets are referred to and reinforced.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a good curriculum which, as the standards demonstrate, is meeting the needs of the pupils. A major reason for this is that pupils are motivated and challenged by the consistent use of problem-solving activities and investigations. In information and communication

technology, for example, the pupils used the Internet to research and then made a presentation on the landscape around the River Nile. Other pupils, when designing and making bags in design technology, researched and tested the strength of materials in science. Their lessons are very well complemented by a range of visits and visitors, with Reception children talking excitedly about their trip to a local farm. The social and personal skills of Year 4 pupils are well enhanced by their residential trip. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils, although parents are correct in their view that given the high standard of pupils' personal development in the school, more opportunities could be extended to Year 1 pupils. There are good and developing links with the pre-school and middle school that help smooth the transfer of pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

There are outstanding levels of care. The school knows the pupils and their families extremely well and this enables early diagnosis of any potential problems. The effect of the various support strategies the school uses is carefully monitored, and adjustments are made as required.

Consequently pupils continue to make good progress. The school is very adept at identifying a specific need and meeting it in the true spirit of 'Every Child Matters'. Recently, for example, there was a need for support for autistic children, and so the school set up a unit and trained teaching assistants to meet these pupils' needs. Support extends to the families, with family learning opportunities being provided. In times of family breakdown the school provides very good guidance, support, and re-assurance, for example, through a range of written materials. Health and safety, risk assessments and child protection procedures are robust. The pupils have targets in literacy and numeracy, know them and use them to help improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The very good leadership of the headteacher is recognised in the overwhelming support for the school demonstrated through parent questionnaires and conversations. Good improvement since the last inspection is seen in the success that the headteacher has had in extending responsibility to staff. Coordinators are now allocated time to observe lessons and monitor their area of responsibility. Together with focussed training for staff, these factors have contributed significantly to the monitoring and evaluation systems within the school, which are outstanding. This very careful monitoring and evaluation of performance enables the right areas for action to be identified. In recent times the school identified a need to further develop the delivery of phonics. A whole-school focus on this has resulted in improvements in standards, particularly in Reception.

The school successfully promotes the idea of partnership with parents. Consequently phonics workshops with parents have taken place to help them to support their children's learning. Resources are extremely well targeted. For example, a need was recognised for additional support within one class and so a second teaching assistant was appointed to meet that need. The governing body has recently reviewed its committee structure so as to better meet the requirements of the Every Child Matters agenda. This, together with an increasingly robust cycle of focused visits into school is helping to ensure that it can now more effectively carry out the role of critical friend.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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 behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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	2

The quality of provision

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

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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	2
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**

I am writing to thank you for your help during my recent visit to your school, and to inform you about what I found. I listened carefully to what you had to say. You were keen to speak to me and you are rightly proud of your school. I agree with you that it is a good school. I also found that it does some things extremely well. This includes the way the adults care for you, and the wide range of people from outside the school that it uses to help you.

I also liked the good work that you do. Your good behaviour, and the fact that you want to do well, means that you learn quickly. You really enjoy school, whether you are in lessons or raising money for charities; your 'jokeathon' assembly filled the school with laughter! You also said that you get many exciting things to do in lessons, and thank you to the children in Reception who gave me a 'pink pig'!

Your attendance is satisfactory, but you could help the school by trying to attend as much as possible.

You told me that the teachers make lessons fun, and I agree that you receive good teaching. I have asked that when teachers mark your work they give you more guidance about your targets. I agree with some of your parents that Year 1 pupils would benefit from more things to do outside of lessons.

Your school councillors showed me how well you understand about staying healthy and safe. I particularly liked the opportunities you have to become involved in your community. Your email contact with the French school is really good, as is the work you do for the local lifeboat. Well done!

Thank you again, and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Pye

Lead Inspector