

Bishop Wood Church of England Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117458
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	312621
Inspection date	25 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Glynis Bradley-Peat

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jenny Scholes
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Hardman
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2004
School address	Frogmore Street Tring Hertfordshire HP23 5AU
Telephone number	01442 822024
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- What impact are leaders and managers having on raising standards and increasing rates of progress across key subjects but particularly in mathematics?
- What impact are leaders having on improving the quality of teaching so as to ensure that pupils achieve as well as possible?
- What were the possible strengths in personal development and the curriculum?

Evidence was gathered from analysis of school documentation, observation of lessons, conversations with learners and discussions with teachers, senior staff and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not inspected in detail, but the inspector found no evidence 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 this report.

Description of the school

Bishop Wood Church of England Junior School is of average size. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but the percentage of those with a statement of special educational need is above that usually found. The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and the percentage of those with English as an additional language is very low. A very low proportion is entitled to free school meals. Pupils' attainment exceeds the levels expected nationally by the start of Year 3. The school has Healthy School accreditation and is part of a 'School Sports Partnership'.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Overall, Bishop Wood provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils and some areas of the school's work are good. For example, there is a real commitment to the pupils' personal development and well-being, which clearly shines through. The school is a close knit, happy and truly caring place where pupils feel safe and secure. One parent commented, 'I would like to draw your attention to the school's pastoral care and how fantastic they were in supporting my son during his time at Bishop Wood.' This is representative of the many positive comments made by parents. Every child matters in this school and the care, guidance and support for pupils and their families are good. Safeguarding and risk assessments are in place. Pupils know who to come to if they have any problems and are confident that any situations will be dealt with effectively.

Academic guidance is generally effective. The system used to track pupils' progress is easy for staff to use and effectively pinpoints those pupils in need of early intervention. However, the school is still debating the best way forward to intervene in mathematics. Individual education plans (IEPs) are written for those pupils who require them, but these are not always reviewed regularly. Most pupils know and understand their targets in English, but this is not the case in mathematics. Although targets are displayed in classrooms, pupils do not always know them.

Standards are above average and achievement is satisfactory overall. Considering the starting points of the pupils, standards in mathematics are not consistently high enough and pupils do not do well enough in national tests. Standards by the end of Year 6 have been broadly static since the time of the last inspection. The 2008 provisional results show an improvement on the dip in 2007 because a much stronger year group entered Year 3 with high achievement. Pupils' achievement in mathematics is not as marked as in English or science because teaching is not as strong in mathematics.

Teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of good teaching in science and literacy, and in these lessons pupils often make good progress. For example, in a good literacy lesson, pupils were held spellbound by the use of a video clip. It enhanced the development of more exciting vocabulary when describing settings for their writing. However, in some mathematics lessons teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are not generally high enough and do not always build on what pupils already know and can do. One pupil said, 'Some teachers make learning fun but other lessons are boring because teachers teach us things we already know.' This was supported by inspection evidence. However, teachers are keen to improve their practice. Pupils recognise that teachers mark their books regularly and that the comments made are helpful to them.

Pupils' personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. Pupils are well behaved, their attendance is above average and they enjoy coming to school. 'Fit and fruity weeks', where all pupils participate in a variety of activities such as smoothie making, road safety, cycling proficiency and sports, serve well to develop the understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Clear moral and spiritual messages underpin the whole-school ethos. Pupils contribute well to the school and local community and enjoy taking on responsibilities. They have raised money for a variety of causes, have entertained senior citizens at the nearby residential home and have written a prayer book for the survivors of the tsunami. Economic well-being is good because pupils have above average basic skills and they are prepared well for life in the secondary sector. They develop work-related

skills through various projects, for example, work-shadowing, running the school shop and participating in a 'life skills' day.

These activities also contribute well to making a good curriculum, which is responsive to local and national initiatives. Pupils praised the variety of extra-curricular clubs, visits to places of interest and visitors into school. The residential trip to Norfolk is particularly appreciated by the pupils. Years 3 and 4 greatly enjoy French and the school has plans to give this learning opportunity to all year groups. The School Sports Partnership has been extremely beneficial in promoting a healthy lifestyle and supporting the development of coordination skills. A quarter of pupils have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Information and communication technology (ICT) is enjoyed, although pupils complain that equipment is not always working adequately. The school recognises that provision for ICT requires further improvement.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's open and friendly style ensures that the majority of parents are supportive and praise the school for its work. However, a significant number of parents feel that their children do not make sufficient progress. Some comment that targets set on IEPs are not revisited and that they do not feel involved sufficiently in their child's learning. Subject leadership is satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. However, subject leaders do not take sufficient responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in their areas. Self-evaluation is accurate and the headteacher has identified the correct priorities for the future. This ensures that there is a satisfactory capacity for further improvement. She rightly realises that there has been a focus on personal development and care, but too little on raising standards and improving achievement. Monitoring of the quality of teaching by the headteacher is thorough, but the system of lesson observation does not include graded evaluation and does not focus sufficiently on the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning. Governance is satisfactory and highly supportive, but governors do not ask enough questions about raising standards and the progress pupils make. They are not as involved as they should be in monitoring school development. Partnership links are good. The school has ensured that it draws support through the local church, local businesses and a university. Already the school is showing determination to reach out into its local community. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics, in order to help pupils make consistently good progress.
- Ensure that parents are more closely involved in, and kept abreast of, the progress their children make, particularly those with individual education plans.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged to be satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	3
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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 are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
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 learners' needs?	3
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?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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**

26 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bishop Wood Church of England Junior School, Tring, HP23 5AU

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to me during my recent visit to your school. I enjoyed meeting you all and talking to you. I would like to tell you now what I found out about your school on my visit.

I found you all to be well behaved, kind and considerate. Well done! You know your school very well and your views were very useful. I am glad to hear that most of you enjoy your lessons and that you have all made so many friends during your time at Bishop Wood. You were telling me how much you knew about leading a healthy lifestyle. It was good to hear that you enjoy the salad bar, but equally that you appreciate that it's alright to eat less healthy food in moderation - for example, 'fun lunches' on Fridays! You know how to keep yourselves safe, and told me that the school deals with your concerns sympathetically.

I am happy that your school ensures that there are lots of interesting clubs and activities for you to participate in during and after school. You certainly like your French lessons and said you particularly appreciated the trip to Norfolk which the school provides.

Your headteacher and her staff work hard and are doing a satisfactory job and ensure that you are cared for very well. I have asked that they work on ensuring that you all do better in tests in Year 6, particularly in mathematics. They can do this by improving the way you are taught in mathematics, for example, by allowing you more time to investigate and think for yourselves instead of your teachers doing all the work for you. Finally, some of your parents are a little concerned that they are not told often enough about how much progress some of you make. I have asked the school to ensure that your parents know clearly how well you are doing.

I hope that you all continue to enjoy your time at Bishop Wood and wish you all the best for the future.

Kind regards

Glynis Bradley-Peat

Lead inspector