

Bledington Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115505
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	363833
Inspection dates	19–20 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Colin Lee

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	80
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Nye
Headteacher	Philip Croke
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons taught by six teachers. They observed the school's work and looked at the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, the school development plan, school planning documents and procedures for keeping pupils safe. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors spoke to a number of parents and carers, and analysed 46 questionnaires completed by them.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The impact of initiatives to improve pupils' attainment and progress in writing in Years 1 and 2 and mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- The extent to which past gender differences in pupils' attainment and progress have been eradicated.
- The progress made by the school towards achieving its target of developing pupils' cultural awareness.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than an average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes of Years Reception/1, 1/2, 3/4 and 5/6. Almost all pupils are from White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The school has awards for several aspects of its work, including Healthy Schools status and the Active Mark award for its high quality work in Physical Education and School Sport.

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

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. It shows widespread improvement in its provision and the outcomes for pupils since the last inspection and parents and carers are delighted with the high quality of education it now provides. They, like the staff and pupils, are very proud of the school and contribute much to its success. There is a strong sense of teamwork amongst all members of the school community which has been created by the headteacher's outstanding leadership. This provides a constant and excellent drive and ambition for improvement that is shared by all.

Children make outstanding progress from the moment they start the Early Years Foundation Stage. High quality teaching throughout the school helps pupils to maintain a high rate of progress until they leave the school at the end of Year 6 with above average attainment. Behaviour is an outstanding feature of pupils' personal development, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their moral code is very strong and they place great emphasis on helping others. They love physical activity and have an excellent understanding of its importance and of the need for healthy eating as the basis for a healthy lifestyle, reflecting the school's several awards. Pupils say that they feel extremely safe at school. They thrive on responsibility and know that their views are valued. They make excellent contributions to the school community and village life. They currently have less contact with, or impact on, national or international communities as the school's plans for extending these aspects of community cohesion are in their infancy.

Pupils' outstanding achievement and enjoyment is a direct result of outstanding teaching providing a high quality of learning experience for each pupil. Assessment is exemplary and many strategies are used well, by both teachers and the pupils themselves, to check pupils' progress, their achievement of targets and their readiness for new challenges in lessons. Pupils very obviously enjoy the learning opportunities provided by a good curriculum that strongly emphasises first-hand experiences.

Equal opportunities and tackling any form of discrimination are at the heart of the school's ethos. Leaders and managers' promotion of these values is one of the outstanding features of the school. This results in the same high rates of progress by all groups of pupils and the high quality of care, guidance and support given to every single pupil. Care is also exemplified by the pupils themselves in the way that the older ones look out for the younger ones and by all in the thoughtfulness shown to those less fortunate than themselves. Senior and subject leaders follow a well-planned programme of monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school's work. This ongoing, rigorous self-evaluation means that the school knows itself very well. English and mathematics coordinators have been very effective in leading the initiatives that have raised attainment and accelerated pupils' progress. This is particularly evident in writing in Years 1 and 2 and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. The governing body has good working relationships with staff and is well

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informed about the day-to-day life of the school. Governors are supportive, yet ready to challenge whenever necessary. They ensure that important responsibilities, such as safeguarding, are secure and effective. They contribute to strategic planning but more input is possible as they are not sufficiently involved in direct monitoring of priorities in school development planning.

With all outcomes, provision and the skills of leaders and managers having improved significantly since the last inspection; this shows that there is an outstanding capacity for improvement in the future.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Extend the promotion of community cohesion to include more opportunities for pupils to engage with communities in the United Kingdom and overseas.
- Increase the governing body's input to strategic planning through governor involvement in monitoring progress towards targets in the school development plan.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

A prominent feature of every lesson seen during the inspection was pupils' obvious love of learning. They talk excitedly about their work, are very clear about what activities are helping them to learn and they are self-motivated by a desire to improve. A group of Year 6 pupils were keen to show an inspector their writing and were quick to point out what has improved since the start of the year. They also showed appreciation of each other's work. This was further evident in English lessons in the Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 classes, when work stopped for everyone to walk round the classroom to have a look at the work of others. They were eager to say what they liked and one pupil said, 'I think I might use that idea, it's really good.' These positive attitudes contribute much to their outstanding achievement and ever-improving progress.

All groups of pupils are meeting the high expectations set for their progress and this is driving attainment upwards. From a starting point of attainment below expectations, improvements in attainment are consistent throughout the school and are evident in many subjects, none more so than in reading, music and physical education, where attainment by the end of Year 6 is now high. These strengths have knock-on effects. The pupils themselves explained how a love of reading makes them want to write and how being helped to be good at physical education has made them appreciate the importance of healthy lifestyles. Past differences in attainment between boys and girls have been eradicated. Pupils of all abilities have a mature ability to work independently, a quality that builds on the independence established in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Like all pupils, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities work equally hard whether they have adult support or work independently and their progress is just as equally outstanding. There is strong emphasis on pupils working collaboratively and this has a marked effect on the quality of learning as well as on their social skills. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 listened respectfully to the ideas of others as they planned a science investigation.

Pupils' feeling of being completely safe in school reflects not only the high quality of care but also pupils' consideration of the needs of others. Those with special responsibilities, for example as school councillors, play leaders or playground buddies, carry these out very conscientiously and successfully. The school's recent focus on developing pupils' cultural

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awareness has resulted in them having a growing understanding of their own as well as other cultures and faith groups. The many outstanding outcomes in pupils' personal development and above average basic literacy and numeracy skills mean that pupils are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is sharply focused on achieving a high quality of learning and pupils know exactly what they are expected to learn in each lesson. The strong emphasis on learning through practical activity and first-hand experience makes learning exciting for pupils. One reason for the excellent behaviour is the fact that pupils get so involved in their work.

Teachers use a range of strategies in lessons, such as target setting and self- and peer assessment by pupils. The latter is a real strength and, by Years 5 and 6, pupils show great maturity in their evaluation of each other's work when they 'mark' it by writing three things they like and one suggestion for improvement. Use of all forms of assessment is outstanding. It is constantly used to provide all pupils with learning activities that are closely matched to their abilities and needs. There is thorough checking of pupils' progress over time and there is a quick reaction to rare underachievement by any pupils, with a programme immediately put in place to tackle the pupils' needs so that they quickly catch up.

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The good curriculum is enriched well by frequent use of educational visits and visitors to the school to support pupils' learning. Teachers plan very stimulating learning activities, making excellent use of the school grounds and the village as resources for learning. Superb displays in classrooms and around the school support and celebrate pupils' learning. There is an excellent range of clubs and activities outside the school day, some of which are run by parents. Take-up of these activities is high, with 90 per cent of pupils attending at least one per week. All provide a hugely popular extension of high quality learning opportunities for pupils. The broad range of sporting activities is a key reason for the school receiving the national Healthy Schools and Active Mark awards. Nonetheless, there is some variation between teachers in how the curriculum is taught, with some using a topic approach that links subjects while others teach subjects discretely. The school is aware of the need to focus on checking that the curriculum overall is providing a clear progression in the skills that pupils learn.

The outstanding quality of pastoral care, guidance and support has considerable impact on pupils' personal development, particularly social skills. The needs of any vulnerable pupils are fully met and there is extra help and support for these and all other pupils whenever they need it. The school works very closely with families, providing support for any parents or carers seeking help or advice.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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?

Leaders drive school improvement very effectively. All staff work closely together to monitor the impact of school improvement measures. Such involvement of all staff reflects the school's outstanding promotion of equal opportunities. This ensures that no member of the school community experiences any form of discrimination. The school's promotion of community cohesion is good. It works hard at integrating all pupils into the school and local communities. Parents and carers have praised the way that the school 'has developed into an intricate part of village life'. The fact that it has yet to establish sufficient links with national and international communities to help pupils fully understand the similarities and differences of their lives in these contexts prevents this aspect from being outstanding. The school makes the most of its close links with the local church, as well as its work with other schools, and professional and community organisations. The development of excellent home-school links is another of these key partnerships that have been used to provide outstanding enhancement of the quality of pupils' learning and their well-being.

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Governors have effective strategies to make them fully informed about the day-to-day life of the school and they work closely with staff, for example through the link that governors have with each subject in the curriculum. This ensures they have thorough knowledge of pupils' attainment, learning and progress. There is currently insufficient monitoring by the governing body itself of progress towards achievement of priority targets in school development planning. This restricts their own input to decisions about next stages in school improvement. They ensure that safeguarding arrangements are thorough and that staff are appropriately and regularly trained in attending to health and safety, risk assessment and child protection issues.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children start school with attainment below expected levels, notably so in language development. The last three years show a downward trend in this attainment on entry and that of the latest cohort, albeit small in number and widely varying between individuals, it is very low overall. Reception children are taught in a class with the youngest Year 1 pupils. The provision is outstanding and helps the children to make exceptional progress in all areas of learning. This is typified by the progress in language development.

Outstanding teaching of a letters and sounds session showed the children to have a knowledge and understanding that helps them approach early reading and writing tasks with confidence and enthusiasm. Data on performance by other year groups shows that outstanding progress continued throughout their time in the Reception Year, with the majority of children starting Year 1 with attainment above average in nearly all areas of learning.

Children experience a rich curriculum that results in tremendous enjoyment of school. Their learning opportunities are carefully planned to provide a balance of indoor and

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outdoor learning and they move to and fro between these environments throughout the day. Outdoors is particularly stimulating, with equipment to support creative play, and areas such as a reading corner, a word wall and facilities for drawing and writing that staff use to maximise the learning potential of any activity.

Constant assessment of children's learning by recording observations of their successes and areas for development is used to plan activities tailored to the needs of individual children. The children are inquisitive and love learning new things. They talk excitedly about their discoveries. The outstanding outcomes and provision are a product of high quality monitoring, evaluation, and collective action by leaders and managers. Together they ensure that all children have an ideal start to school life.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Just over 50 per cent of parents and carers returned the questionnaire. Of those, the vast majority are very happy with the school and levels of satisfaction are well above average. Parents and carers see many strengths and are particularly appreciative of how the school keeps their children safe and helps them to adopt healthy lifestyles. Many questionnaires had additional positive comments that praised the quality of teaching. Almost all parents feel they are very well informed about their children's progress. Inspection evidence leads inspectors to agree with all these positive views. The few expressions of concern about unacceptable behaviour are more than counter-balanced by written comments that praise discipline, and about how an issue of unruly behaviour was resolved by involving the pupils in decision making about how it can be eradicated. The inspection team judge behaviour to be outstanding, both in lessons and at playtimes.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Bledington 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 46 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 80 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	78	9	20	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	37	80	9	20	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	32	70	14	30	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	78	8	17	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	83	8	17	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	80	7	15	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	87	6	13	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)	35	76	9	20	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	80	8	17	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	67	12	26	3	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	83	5	11	3	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	87	6	13	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	83	8	17	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 all 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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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:	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. <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 pupils' 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.



21 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bledington Primary School, Chipping Norton OX7 6US

I am writing to thank you for helping us during the inspection of your school. We especially enjoyed talking to you and listening to your views. We have taken these views into account in writing this report. Bledington Primary School is an outstanding school. Here are some of the main findings from the report.

- You said how much you enjoy school and we saw that in your enthusiasm in lessons and your ability to work hard.
- All of you are making excellent progress and your work is of a good standard, particularly in reading, writing, mathematics and science and we also saw some very high standards in physical education and music.
- You are taught superbly and teachers plan a good curriculum that gives you many exciting learning opportunities.
- Your behaviour is excellent and we saw how well you all look out for one another. This makes your school a very happy place that everyone enjoys.
- You do many jobs around the school that help it run smoothly and make a good contribution to village life. We want the school to go ahead with plans to set up links with schools or organisations in the United Kingdom and abroad so that you can learn about people's lives in places that are different to Bledington.
- You say you feel very safe in school ? this is because the adults do an outstanding job in looking after you, making sure you get help whenever you need it.
- The headteacher and others lead and manage the school outstandingly well and all the adults work well together to help the school to improve. We have asked the governors to check for themselves how much improvement is being achieved.

Thank you once again for your help during our visit, and best wishes for your work in the future. You can help to by continuing to work hard, and enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make Bledington Primary School an even better school.

Yours sincerely

Colin Lee

Lead inspector

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