

Bonnygate Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114968
Local Authority	Thurrock
Inspection number	311775
Inspection dates	10–11 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Neill Boatman
Headteacher	Mr Jim Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	20–23 September 2004
School address	Arisdale Avenue South Ockendon Essex RM15 5BA
Telephone number	01708 853316
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Bonnygate is an average size primary school. Most of the pupils are from a White British background. The remainder are from a range of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The nature of these includes moderate learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is also well above average. About 8% of pupils are from traveller families. The school provides Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision for children in Nursery and Reception. The headteacher was appointed in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Good leadership by the headteacher and strong teamwork by staff has brought about significant improvements to Bonnygate. Its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. There are good features to its work. Positive action has been taken to raise achievement and standards by improving the quality of teaching. Good improvements to provision in the EYFS mean that children in Nursery and Reception get off to a good start and make good progress. In the rest of the school, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Effective pastoral care and support leads to good personal development and well-being for pupils.

Parents hold very positive views about the school and the vast majority are pleased with the care and education provided for their children. Parents have noted the school's improvements and the following comments from the questionnaires sum up the views of many, 'The school has made vast improvements', 'The headteacher has brought a new fresh approach, and the opportunity for parents to communicate with the school' and 'The general feel of the school has improved considerably'.

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. All staff share his focus on raising standards and improving teaching. Performance is systematically reviewed and the findings are used well to guide improvements. The leadership roles of other staff, particularly their monitoring and evaluation skills are developing well. Teamwork among the staff is good and there is a strong commitment to improvement. Better teaching is having a positive impact on achievement and standards. However, the school is not complacent and leaders are aware that there is more to do before teaching and achievement are consistently good. However, the school has demonstrated a good capacity to improve.

During the last two years, standards by the end of Year 6 have steadily improved from exceptionally low levels to below average in English, mathematics and science. Weaknesses in assessment and teaching in the past contributed to pupils' inadequate progress. This underachievement has been eliminated.

Teaching is satisfactory and improving. There are examples of good practice. The purpose of lessons is clear and pupils' respond well to teachers' effective instructions and questioning. Pupils make good progress when they are challenged and tasks are well matched to their abilities and needs. This good practice is not always consistent and learning can decline. Occasionally lessons do not proceed at a fast enough pace. Teaching assistants contribute well to pupils' learning. The marking of pupils' work provides praise but does not always give comments to help them improve. Not all teachers are using individual learning targets to promote pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy.

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their keen participation in activities. They work collaboratively in lessons and play together well in the playground. Most pupils are well behaved but the school does have some with challenging behaviour. These pupils are well managed and supported. Attendance is satisfactory. The school works hard to promote good attendance, but a small minority of pupils' have extended

absence. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and know how to keep themselves safe. They make good contributions to the school and wider community.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage **Grade: 2**

Children enter the Nursery with knowledge and skills well below those expected for their age. Language and social skills are often particularly low. Good leadership and a strong commitment from the EYFS team have resulted in considerable improvements to this area of the school. Children settle quickly into routines and enjoy their learning because of effective induction procedures. First Steps is an effective initiative, with workshops which help parents to support their children's learning. Good quality teaching, effective care and an exciting range of activities enable all children to make good progress in all areas of learning. Children enjoy a well planned range of topics such as colours, growing, mini beasts, nursery rhymes and 'ourselves'. Teachers and assistants provide an effective blend of adult-led tasks and opportunities for children to explore, be creative and work independently. The teaching of letter sounds and basic information and communication technology (ICT) skills is effective. Just occasionally, the introductions to sessions are over-long and learning slows. The outdoor learning areas have been developed well. Outdoor activities are linked well to the main themes. Good role-play activities promote children's speaking skills well. By the end of Reception, standards are below those expected but the children have made good progress from their starting points.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement and standards further in English, mathematics and science by ensuring that all lessons are consistently challenging.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching, ensuring that all lessons maintain a brisk pace and that the existing good quality practice is more widespread.
- Sharpen individual target setting and marking to accelerate pupils' progress.

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

Achievement and standards **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children in EYFS get off to a good start because of improvements in provision. Standards in Year 2 are significantly below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The picture of improvement in Years 1 and 2 has been less consistent than in other parts of the school because weaknesses in teaching remained until recently. Standards in Year 6 are below average in English, mathematics and science. This represents significant improvement from the previous two years. More pupils are now attaining expected levels. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 in science increased significantly in summer 2008. Pupils who find learning difficult make sound progress from their starting points.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are enthusiastic about school and have positive attitudes to learning. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although their knowledge and understanding of non-western cultures is only satisfactory. Pupils are courteous and friendly. They wholeheartedly celebrate the achievement of others in assembly. A productive partnership with a local special school contributes well to the care and respect pupils show for each other. Behaviour is good because of clear expectations and positive relationships between adults and pupils. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and possess a good understanding of the importance of healthy diets and taking regular exercise. They thrive on additional responsibilities. For example, older pupils are library monitors and act as play leaders to the younger ones. They contribute well to the wider community by raising funds for well-known charities. At Bonnygate, pupils are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education and later life. By the time they leave, they have well-developed personal and social skills and possess sound literacy and numeracy skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory with examples of good practice. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson clear so pupils know what they are expected to learn. Pupils are attentive and respond well to their teachers' clear instructions and effective questioning. Some teaching, such as a mathematics lesson in Year 6, provides challenging opportunities for pupils to work in groups and apply thinking and numeracy skills, in this case to solve problems about temperature. Pupils were fully engaged in their learning and showed a good understanding of negative numbers. Pupils made good progress because challenging and interesting tasks were well tailored to pupils' needs. However, activities are not consistently matched to pupils' needs. Most teachers use assessment information effectively to do this, but practice is not consistent in all lessons. When work is not well matched to pupils' needs, their interest and learning declines. Occasionally, the pace of learning slows with overlong teacher introductions where pupils are not sufficiently involved in their learning. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and contribute well to learning, particularly for pupils who need additional support with literacy or their behaviour. Marking provides praise and encouragement for good work. However, clear comments to help pupils improve are limited.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well and enables them to make satisfactory academic progress. The increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills is having a positive impact on achievement. The school is increasing opportunities for pupils to apply and develop literacy and numeracy skills in other areas. Provision for art and design is a strength of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 4 produced striking abstract pictures in the style of Kandinsky and Picasso using charcoal, ink, and poster paint. A productive partnership with a local

special school resulted in a joint project producing an impressive Tudor textured quilt. Pupils have good opportunities to learn to play a musical instrument. The whole of Year 6 learned to play the flute last year and this year's Year 5 are learning the guitar. Healthy lifestyles and personal safety education are promoted well across the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Effective pastoral care and support contribute well to pupils' personal development. Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are good. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are well managed and supported. A good partnership with a local special school helps to develop pupils' care and respect for others. The school has gained the confidence of the traveller community who appreciate the care and support given to their children. Assessment information is usually used well to plan teaching. Pupils of similar ability have group targets for writing and mathematics. Most pupils know what they are working to improve but not all teachers incorporate targets consistently into day-to-day work. Targets are more finely tuned to pupils' needs in Years 2 and 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has led the drive to raise standards and improve teaching. He is also well focused on developing leadership and management skills at all levels. The positive 'can do' attitudes among the staff have contributed to the improvements made. The school has made good use of local authority and external consultants in its drive for improvement.

Accurate and robust self-evaluation means that the school has a clear view of its strengths and areas for development. Senior staff and consultants monitor teaching and positive action is taken to improve practice. The school has eliminated the past underachievement. The considerable improvements to the EYFS provisions, the raising of standards over the past last two years and the acceleration of improvements by the current headteacher, demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve. However, the school is not complacent and leaders are aware that there is still more to do before teaching and pupils' achievement are consistently good. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall.

The school is increasing community cohesion initiatives to support pupils' learning and development. The 'First Steps' project provides clear guidance to parents in supporting their children's learning in the EYFS. Partnerships with the traveller community and a special school are productive. The school recognises the need to extend the pupils' awareness of other cultures around the world.

Governance is improving with the school. Governors are well informed about the school's performance and offer good support. They are beginning to provide constructive challenge and hold the school to account.

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

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?	3
The effectiveness of boarding provision	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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

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
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	3

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.

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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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



12 September 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bonnygate Primary School, South Ockenden, RM15 5BA

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found. Yours is a satisfactory and improving school. It has good features.

These are the strengths of the school.

- You enjoy coming to school.
- Your school is a friendly, caring and pleasant place to be.
- Children in Nursery and Reception make good progress.
- Your behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
- You show a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and keeping safe.
- You have produced good quality artwork which is proudly displayed.
- Staff take good care of you and give you good support.
- Your headteacher provides good leadership and with the staff, has made good improvements to the school.
- Your parents give the school good support and are pleased with the care and education provided.

There are three things that we have asked the school to do to make it even better.

- Some of you could make more progress in English, mathematics and science; the school has clear plans to make this happen.
- Sometimes your teachers could challenge you more and ensure that lessons move on at a brisker pace.
- Clearer and more detailed marking and target setting could help you make more progress.

You can help by continuing to behave well and working hard, particularly in literacy, numeracy and science activities. Finally, thank you once again for all your help. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Derek Watts

Lead inspector