



Bournes Green Junior School

Inspection report

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 114786
 Local Authority Southend-on-Sea
 Inspection number 290027
 Inspection dates 29 January 2007
 Reporting inspector John William Paull

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Ladram Road
School category	Community		Thorpe Bay
Age range of pupils	7 - 11		Southend-on-Sea
			SS1 3PX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01702 587913
Number on roll (school)	266	Fax number	01702 588181
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Stewart White
		Headteacher	Mr Rupert Snow
Date of previous school inspection	2 – 3 December 2002		

Age group 7 - 11	Inspection date(s) 29 January 2007	Inspection no. 290027
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector in one day.

Description of the school

Bournes Green is a larger than average size junior school. The vast majority of pupils are from a white British heritage with very few pupils coming from backgrounds where English is not the home language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average and the proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average.

The school holds the Activemark (a quality mark for physical education and sports) and Investors in People accreditations. It has also received a Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Bournes Green is an outstanding school. Many pupils demonstrate above average standards when they join the school. The whole staff, led excellently by the headteacher and senior leaders, see this situation as both a privilege and a challenge. Pupils' targets are therefore set very high but even so are nearly always met. Governors are fully involved in decisions and are effective in their support. The school monitors its performance closely, responds to parents' and pupils' questionnaires positively and rigorously evaluates the information gained to ensure that what is being provided meets all pupils' needs. Consequently, an excellent curriculum, outstandingly taught, results in the maintenance of high standards as pupils move through the school.

Teachers employ a wide range of methods to enthuse pupils about learning. Pupils therefore make rapid progress, resulting in outstanding achievement. For the past two years, over half the pupils leaving for secondary school have attained a level above that normally expected in English, mathematics and science. A high proportion succeeds in tests for admission to local grammar schools. Standards in other subjects are similarly high. The school boasts a choir and orchestras, reflecting strong musical provision. Academically gifted pupils have work that challenges them intellectually. Those with a particular talent have many opportunities to share their skills with others. Partnerships with other organisations, such as local tennis, football and rugby clubs have been successfully developed. Children's achievements in activities undertaken outside school, such as equestrianism, are celebrated through school assemblies. Such arrangements successfully help pupils to develop physical skills that might not otherwise be open to them.

Pupils' personal development is also outstanding. Pupils are often excited by their work and show it in their willingness to research information for themselves. They behave well, sensibly and safely. Nearly all take physical education very seriously, understanding the subject's important contribution to a healthy lifestyle. They adopt highly responsible attitudes to those less fortunate than themselves, raising money and performing for them. Relationships in the school are very strong. Pupils express gratitude to the whole staff for caring for them so well and are confident that their teachers would support them if they experienced difficulties. Outstanding skills in information and communication technology (ICT), literacy and numeracy allied to their excellent sociability mean that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for life beyond school.

The school's excellence is due to outstanding leadership. This ensures that morale is high and the school's performance is managed most effectively. Outcomes are evaluated and any weaknesses are dealt with. Currently, the highly accurate process of self-evaluation has identified a need to introduce

new procedures for assessing pupils' progress and it is recognised that these are not yet fully effective. Further training in how to apply them and analyse the resulting information is therefore planned. The school's many strengths mean that it is providing excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

This outstanding school has no major weaknesses. To ensure its continuing excellence, the headteacher, senior staff and governors should:

- Ensure that all teachers implement and use the new assessment procedures effectively.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 3 is often high. Pupils then make rapid progress, owing to excellent teaching. Pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills are outstanding. Achievement is outstanding. Results of national tests are consistently exceptional and show a recent rising trend. In 2005, over half of Year 6 reached a level above that normally expected, with very high standards in mathematics and science. Senior leaders and staff were neither complacent nor satisfied. While performance in English was good, it was not quite as high as in the other subjects. Careful monitoring indicated a relative weakness in writing, especially amongst boys. Action was taken to provide work to enthuse them, without detracting from the enjoyment of girls. English results in 2006 show this focus to have been successful. The proportion of boys reaching the level higher than that normally expected rose considerably.

Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve well and are frequently amongst those attaining at the highest level. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities also do well. Work is adapted effectively to meet their needs and well trained teaching assistants support them well. As a result, these pupils make exceptional progress and often reach the standards expected nationally by the end of Year 6.

Personal development and well-being **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is exemplary. Nearly all parents are remarkably complimentary about their children's personal progress and they are indeed right to be so. One comment, typical of many, likened a child's growing confidence to the opening

of a rosebud, generously giving credit to the school's staff. Pupils enjoy school greatly, which is reflected in above average attendance and good punctuality. They respond wholeheartedly to what is provided, benefiting very much from some innovative provision. For example, 'peer massage', during which pupils help to relax each other, contributes to trusting relationships and a very strong team spirit. Pupils help staff and each other politely and very willingly whenever the need arises. Pupils' exceptional concern for others extends to the wider community when the choir and orchestra go out to perform in local hospitals and raise significant funds for a local children's hospice. Elected school councillors offer a confident view of what senior leaders should do next to improve the school. Many pupils speak convincingly about the need for 'five fruits and vegetables a day' and they drink water sensibly. They know many simple safety procedures and nearly all of them behave well. Those with social and emotional difficulty are supported strongly and effectively by staff.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is outstanding. Careful monitoring of pupils' work ensures that modifications to practice are effective in maintaining high quality. This takes place in a thoroughly professional spirit, so morale is high and pupils' best interests are always paramount. A good example is how the teaching of writing has been modified to improve boys' performance. The effectiveness of teaching is clearly demonstrated in higher standards in English through the school and in an impressive rise in Year 6 test results in 2006.

A wide range of methods, consistently appropriate to the learning requirements of tasks and pupils, are employed. On occasions, when required, pupils are silent, listening very attentively for example to music that they have been asked to appraise. On another occasion, there may be an excited buzz of conversation, as they share results in groups, passing on skills and research findings. Teaching assistants are fully involved in planning and have the necessary skills to support pupils' learning effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities benefit strongly from their help, making good progress towards their individual targets. More able pupils also flourish in this climate.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum fully meets the school's stated aim of providing as much breadth of experience as possible. It is also well balanced, maintaining the important focus on English, mathematics and science, while ensuring the rapid acquisition

of skills across other subjects. Arrangements to promote the needs of gifted and talented pupils and to celebrate their skills are good. Opportunities for the development of physical skills are exceptional, both during the day and after school, reflecting the award of an Activemark. Skills in art and music are also developed well through meticulous planning. Careful curricular planning ensures that explicit links between the content of subjects are made. Highly effective intervention programmes are in place to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. Strong social and multicultural opportunities help pupils of all backgrounds, including those with English as an additional language, to feel at home and to make rapid progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Provision for pupils' safety and well-being is of high quality. Child protection procedures follow local and national requirements closely. Pupils stated that they would know what to do if a situation arose that caused concern. Adults exemplify good relationships, which pupils then adopt well amongst themselves, which contributes both to the climate for learning and to their well-being. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are carefully assessed and the support provided for them promotes their progress most effectively. High quality systems to track pupils' academic performance have been introduced although, owing to recent changes in the system, these are not fully understood and applied with similar effectiveness by all staff.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Outstanding leadership and management have resulted in excellent teamwork amongst all staff at all levels. Everyone cooperates professionally with the school's highly effective monitoring system. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, if sometimes modest in its assessment of the school's quality. The whole staff discusses information that arises and is involved in setting challenging targets for future progress. Developmental aims and targets for pupils' progress are met on time and are often exceeded. This track record indicates that the capacity to improve is excellent. Governors understand the school's considerable strengths, but are still prepared to raise issues where they think that improvement can be made. New systems of assessment have recently been introduced. While senior leaders are adept in using them, not all staff fully understand their application at this stage. Similarly, while governance is strong, partly owing to the newness of this system, governors are not yet fully aware of its usefulness at a strategic level. The headteacher, together with senior staff, agree that this relative weakness should be addressed as quickly as possible.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

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
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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	2
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	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.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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?	2

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	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	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	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



30 January 2007

Dear Children

Bournes Green Junior School, Ladram Road, Thorpe Bay, Southend-on-Sea, SS1 3PX

Thank you for being so kind, friendly and polite when I visited your school. You helped such a lot to make the day go smoothly. I enjoyed speaking to you and seeing your work. It is excellent that so many of you told me that you believe your teachers teach you very well and look after you carefully while you are there. I agree with you about these ideas. I also enjoyed talking to the two groups that your headteacher put together for me and to the School Councillors. I agree with them that your school is excellent and that your work is of high quality.

Here are more things that are positive about your school:

- You make exceptional progress in English, mathematics and science.
- The way that you cooperate with your teachers and each other is excellent.
- Your behaviour is good.
- It helps you to grow up confidently, so you are very willing to co-operate with others and to perform in the community.
- Your teachers use lots of different ways to help you learn.
- Your headteacher has lots of excellent ideas for the school's future.

Here is something that I have asked your headteacher, teachers and school governors to do:

- Make sure that all the staff understand the new ways of checking your progress.

You are rightly proud of your school. I hope that you will continue to get on very well and that you will always be confident about helping your teachers and telling them your ideas. They are very pleased that you do.

John William Paull
Lead Inspector