

Banwell Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109090
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	324893
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Robert Pyner HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Robinson
Headteacher	Mr Harry Cadwallader
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 June 2006
School address	West Street Banwell BS29 6DB
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at data the school has collected to monitor pupils' progress, school policies, including safeguarding procedures, strategic planning and children's work. In addition, 31 parental questionnaires were returned by parents and scrutinised by the inspection team.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the attainment of pupils on entry to the school in order to measure the extent of the progress made by Year 6
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage in developing pupils' language and literacy skills
- the impact of teaching on pupils' learning, particularly for writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 and for more able pupils in Key Stage 2, in order to determine whether it is suitably challenging
- how well data on progress is used to improve attainment and progress, particularly in mathematics at Key Stage 2
- the effectiveness of leadership at all levels in driving forward improvements based on self-evaluation.

Information about the school

Banwell Primary is a smaller than average school and serves the village and surrounding area. Although pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds, there is evidence within the community of economic disadvantage. Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few do not speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is almost double the national average. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above the national average but the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below the national figure. A larger than average proportion of pupils leave or join the school other than at the usual times.

The school has achieved the Investor in People, Healthy School, Eco School and Activemark awards. Very recently, the school has been awarded the Leading Aspect award for excellence in the provision of academic guidance, care and support for pupils.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Banwell Primary is a good school. Parents really appreciate its work, particularly the care and support provided for the pupils and their families. The responses to the questionnaire distributed as part of the inspection were overwhelmingly positive, but particularly so regarding this aspect and also the links the school has with parents. This comment is typical of many: 'Banwell School is second to none when it comes to parent support. I have attended 'share' meetings, adult learning courses and parent workshops, which have all helped support my child's learning. I feel the school and parents are a team working to achieve the same goals.' The school should be proud that its hard work in developing excellent links with parents and working in partnership with them to meet the needs of the pupils and their families is so well appreciated. This inspection also confirms that the effectiveness of the school's care, guidance and support and engagement with parents and carers are outstanding.

The quality of pupils' learning and the progress they make overall is good and they are lively and keen to do well. Standards across the school are improving and by the end of Key Stage 2, tests in 2008 show results which were just above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Results also showed good improvement in English, and the school mostly exceeded targets set in this subject as well as in mathematics. The school's own monitoring of progress shows that current Year 6 pupils are on track to improve further this year. At Key Stage 1, results for this year show an improvement in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly at the higher level, from the previous year's below average results. However, the improvement and progress in writing is less marked than in other subjects, reflecting the lower attainment in pupils' language skills on entry to the school. Scrutiny of pupils' books show that they have a pride in their work and, at Key Stage 2, respond very well to the excellent marking undertaken by teachers. This marking informs pupils of specific steps to be undertaken to widen their understanding. Time is given in lessons to review and respond to comments in books. Pupils report that this is important in helping them to reflect on their learning and helps them to make good progress.

Teaching is good overall as teachers work hard to make sure that pupils are motivated, engaged and supported well by teaching assistants. This is particularly the case in Years 5 and 6. Teachers use assessment well to plan lessons, and relationships in classrooms are good. In those lessons, where teaching is satisfactory the pace is slower so reducing the challenge for pupils. In these lessons, there are

sometimes insufficient opportunities for them to use the skills they have learned independently.

The school has developed excellent provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils and their families. The work of the learning mentor, for example, has been a vital factor, in improving attendance and the support of vulnerable pupils and their families. Pupils greatly appreciate the individual support they receive.

Leaders and managers carry out effective self-evaluation and incorporate the views and needs of parents and others in the school community into this process. This informs developments and priorities for the school. The headteacher has very good relations with pupils and their parents. Governors are well informed, supportive and challenge the school to raise achievement further. School leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and secure improvement well. The school is about to undergo a number of staff changes but, due to the effective systems in place, has a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of good or better teaching to 90% of lessons by summer 2010 by monitoring closely:
 - pace in lessons
 - the challenge for all ability groups
 - the extent to which pupils are active in their learning to reinforce skills and by extending the opportunities for staff to observe good practice in the school.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, accelerate pupils' progress in writing skills by:
 - identifying areas of weakness earlier and providing robust intervention strategies
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills
 - monitoring pupils' progress closely to ensure improvement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In most lessons observed, pupils made good progress. They were well engaged and motivated in lessons and keen to please their teachers. An example of this was in a lesson for Year 6 pupils who were preparing scripts promoting Shakespeare's plays, following on from the school's production of 'Romeo and Juliet'. Pupils worked well together, listening and responding to others' views, sharing tasks effectively that culminated in thoughtful presentations to the class. Pupils enjoy lessons and are friendly, hardworking and well behaved. This is a reflection of the strong moral code throughout the school. Pupils respond well to this, although some may become distracted if the tasks on which they are working are not carefully matched to their ability. The school is a calm and orderly community where relationships are effective. Older pupils accept their responsibilities well, such as in supporting younger ones, and they have an important voice in the development of the school. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and say they feel safe and know

that adults in the school will help them if they have worries or concerns. Targets set for pupils' progress are appropriate and monitored effectively, with mostly good intervention for those who are in danger of underachievement. Boys and girls make similar progress in their work. Although, progress in writing for younger children is slower than for other subjects.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress in their learning. They are very well supported in their work by careful planning based on their needs, with good support from teaching assistants. The work of the learning mentor is effective in developing programmes for individuals and providing counselling support for pupils when required. This enhances their learning and social skills.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	2
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	2
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	2
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	2
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

How effective is the provision?

Lessons are enjoyable and pupils find them interesting through imaginative use of resources, including new technology. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and use questioning well to reinforce learning or introduce new challenges. They set out clear objectives and sessions are well managed. Consequently, pupils experience a mix of listening to the teacher, responding to questions and opportunities to discuss their work among themselves. In the majority of lessons assessment of pupils' progress is used effectively to plan activities which are appropriate. However, where teaching is satisfactory there is insufficient challenge for more able groups, with the result that they become distracted. Assessment of pupils' learning and progress over time is thorough. Staff use this information well to identify pupils who need additional support programmes. Despite improvement this year, additional support is not yet as sharply focused as it could be

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

to support progress for younger children in developing letters and sounds and writing skills.

The curriculum is well organised, and cross-curricular themes provide stimulating opportunities for learning by using a variety of visits and visitors to enhance learning and provide a rich programme for pupils. They particularly enjoy the opportunities to pursue themes and develop a wide range of skills such as, for example, the Year 5 work on Ancient Egypt exploring culture and beliefs, linking to other subjects such as art and design and information and communication technology. A wide range of additional activities outside the school day enhance learning and broaden understanding, and these are greatly enjoyed by pupils.

The very well targeted care and support for pupils enables them to learn and develop in a secure environment. All adults show very good understanding of the needs of individuals, and particularly vulnerable pupils. The school is particularly good at consulting with parents and carers. This has resulted in better attendance and good progress for pupils who face challenging circumstances as well as effective support for their parents.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
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?

The headteacher provides good educational direction for the school and works closely with a range of other agencies and partners to achieve success and enhance the work of the school. Teamwork is strong in the school and this shared leadership style supports teachers' professional development.

There are effective systems for self-evaluation leading to clear priorities for improvement, particularly focused on raising achievement and personal development. Attention is also securely focused on ensuring equal opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled. In this, there is excellent engagement with parents and carers so that their views are taken into consideration, which is greatly appreciated by them. The governing body is well informed and provides effective challenge to improve provision and achievement.

The safeguarding arrangements meet national requirements well. The school also makes a good contribution to promoting community cohesion. Staff have undertaken an effective audit of provision and have been successful in developing very good links with groups of parents, including those facing challenging circumstances, to enhance support for their children as well as gaining qualifications for themselves. However, links to help pupils understand the nature of the wider British community

and the way of life of those living overseas, although good overall, could be developed further.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of education in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children join the school with broadly average standards expected for their age, except in some aspects of communication and language skills. Some children also display weaker social skills. During their time in the Reception class, the progress children make in all areas of learning is good overall. However, the progress made in linking sounds and letters and writing is weaker. Effective support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities means that they make similar gains in their learning. The children develop good levels of independence through a range of activities and tasks with effective opportunities to make their own choices. Good relationships with adults enable children to develop confidence and learning skills.

Assessments of progress are rigorous and based on observations which support future planning for individuals and groups. Parents are well informed about their own child's learning and are encouraged to discuss progress with staff. Leaders have a good understanding of what improvements are required, with good development plans in place, for example in the development of the learning of sounds and letters.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

From the returned questionnaires, it is very clear that the school enjoys the confidence and support of the parental community. Responses to each of the questions asked were overwhelmingly positive and many added comments praising the school's work. In particular, parents commented positively on the leadership of the school, the progress made by the children, the quality of the teaching, the welcoming and friendly atmosphere of the school and the support for parents. A very few parents noted their concerns about supervision and safety aspects during 'Wheels on Wednesday', when pupils can bring their bicycles and scooters to school. The inspectors found that adult supervision was satisfactory during the session observed at the beginning of the inspection and pupils understood the importance of safety, such as wearing helmets.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Banwell Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we ask them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 31 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 148 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	27	4	0	0

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. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
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. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
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.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
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.



26 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Banwell Primary School, Banwell BS29 6DB

Thank you so much for welcoming the inspection team to your school when we visited recently. I particularly enjoyed hearing about the preparations for your production of 'Romeo and Juliet' and was able to see some of the last-minute rehearsals. I know that your first performance was very good and enjoyed by your parents – well done!

This letter is to tell you about what the inspection team found.

Your school is good overall, and there are some aspects that are outstanding. One of these is how well you and your families are supported. Another is the excellent way the headteacher and staff find out from parents what they think about the school and how it can be improved. The standards you attain are improving and are broadly average and the progress that you make during the time at the school is good. You have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and behave well. Many of you told us how much you enjoy school and appreciate how the staff help you to learn, and take care of you. Particularly impressive was the way the older pupils really think about the comments teachers write in their books to help them improve and follow the advice given. It was clear to us that your school is a very happy place.

All schools can improve, and we have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to work on two areas to improve your learning and achievement even further. The first is to make sure that the younger children make greater progress in their writing skills. The second is a challenge for teachers to work together and learn from each other so that their teaching is even better.

You can play a very important part in helping to improve your school even more by continuing to work hard, attend regularly and help each other. I am sure that you will.

Yours faithfully

Robert Pyner
Her Majesty's Inspector

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