

Benedict Biscop Church of England Aided Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108848
Local authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	377830
Inspection dates	25–26 January 2012
Lead inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	249
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Mulvaney
Headteacher	Paula Thompson
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Moira Fitzpatrick
Michael Wardle

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching in 20 lessons taught by nine teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation relating to school improvement, pupils' progress and safeguarding procedures and looked at pupils' work in a range of subjects. There were no comments from parents and carers to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to take into account when planning the inspection. Inspectors took account of the views of parents and carers expressed in 136 questionnaires that were returned during the inspection, and of the views expressed in staff and pupils' questionnaires.

Information about the school

The school is of average size for a primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils, pupils with special educational needs or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, though there is an increasing proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds. Few pupils speak English as an additional language. The school meets the current government floor standard. The school has received many awards since the previous inspection including, Healthy School status, Eco-Schools, Sport England, the Artsmark Gold and the Full International School Award and Quality in Study Award. The governing body manages the breakfast and after-school provisions.

The school has recently gained academy status. It becomes The Benedict Biscop Church Of England Academy on 1 February 2012.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key Findings

- Benedict Biscop is an outstanding school. Parents and carers express extremely positive views about the education it provides for their children, describing it as, 'A fabulous school, fabulous opportunities.'
- Pupils' achievement is excellent. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is significantly above the national average and pupils have made exceptional progress from their starting points.
- Children get off to a flying start in nursery and continue to be very successful learners throughout their time in school. The school is appropriately making further developments to the Early Years Foundation Stage provision.
- Care and support for pupils are outstanding, including in the before- and after-school provision. Each child is cherished as a unique individual and is taught to respect themselves for their special qualities and the contribution they make to the life of the school.
- Teaching is outstanding in all phases of the school. It is based on excellent knowledge of pupils' needs and an outstanding, exciting curriculum that is adapted extremely well to pupils' interests. Lessons buzz with enthusiasm throughout the day.
- Daily worship makes an excellent contribution to pupils' strong sense of community and their outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils' collaborative skills are of the highest order and make a tremendous contribution to their rate of learning. Pupils' safety and well-being are paramount. Pupils say that they are very safe in school, and their parents and carers agree.

- Leadership and management, including governance, are outstanding. The inspirational leadership of the headteacher motivates all to give of their best. The pursuit of excellence is evident in every aspect of the school's work. The deputy headteacher monitors pupils' progress assiduously to ensure that every pupil is kept on the track to success.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make further improvement to the Early Years Foundation Stage by developing outdoor provision in line with the school's current plans.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils make rapid and secure gains in their learning to reach significantly above average standards because of teachers' excellent use of assessment information. Learning is always well matched to pupils' needs and interests so that they engage immediately with tasks. Pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs are extremely well supported by teachers' planning and by highly skilled teaching assistants so they make the same progress as their peers. They sometimes make even better progress, especially in reading, so that they reach the expected level for their age by the time they leave the school.

Pupils' excellent collaborative skills contribute significantly to the brisk learning seen in lessons. They thrive on challenge and excitement in their learning. For instance, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils keenly calculated costs for a meal to celebrate Chinese New Year, and responded very enthusiastically to being asked to reduce the price by 12%. Pupils' constantly refine and consolidate their excellent basic skills through their learning in other subjects. In Year 2, while pupils were building buggies, they learned appropriate adverbs such as, carefully, neatly and firmly, while rehearsing how they would write instructions for others to follow.

On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, most children's skills are typical for their age. They quickly become enthusiastic, confident learners who direct their own learning well. By the end of reception, all children achieve well to reach the expected goals for their learning and every year a good proportion exceeds this level. While provision outdoors is not yet as well developed as the school would like, provision for learning here is still good.

Pupils' attainment in reading is well above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 6. Many pupils exceed the expectation for their age, and in 2011 a good proportion of Year 6 pupils reached Level 6 in reading, writing and mathematics in pilot tests. Pupils of all abilities have excellent communication skills because they are encouraged to talk as a way of developing their thinking and deepening their learning. The gap in attainment between girls and boys is narrowing because of changes to the curriculum, designed to engage boys' interest more consistently. The

overwhelming majority of parents' and carers' responses understandably indicate that they are extremely happy with their children's progress and attainment.

Quality of teaching

Teachers and teaching assistants infuse lessons with a love of learning and work in excellent partnership to get the best from pupils. Staff have created an outstanding curriculum, fully geared to pupils' interests, talents and stage of development. This is a key element in the excellent teaching and learning seen across the school. For example, a Year 4 lesson on performance poetry gave pupils excellent opportunities to develop their teamwork skills while creating a poem about the sea. Concentration was superb, so that in a short time they had completed their poems, rehearsed their presentation and then went on improve and redraft their writing. This kind of fast-paced learning is typical and is driven by pupils' excellent collaborative skills.

Teachers are skilled at designing learning so that pupils are constantly making links between subjects while developing their skills of reading, writing, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). This is due to the excellent resources they provide and their skilful organisation of learning activities. Year 3 pupils made excellent gains, through practical investigation, in their learning about how volcanoes erupted. They refined their ICT research skills, developed their understanding through discussion and were able to complete written descriptions of their findings. In this instance, the skilful management of a range of activities ensured all pupils had time to complete the challenging tasks to their own and the teacher's satisfaction. Such lessons are contributing constantly to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Teachers make excellent assessments of pupils' learning. In lessons they keep a careful check on how pupils are progressing and promptly intervene when they spot errors. Marking is exemplary. It is regular, meticulous and gives pupils clear advice on how to improve their work. Parents and carers are overwhelming in their agreement that their children are well taught; inspection evidence fully supports their views.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils have an excellent understanding of risks to their well-being because they are taught about these from the earliest age. For example, a nursery child explained to the visitor that, 'only one at a time on the tile board' was allowed, 'because of the hammer.' This early understanding is developed systematically so that by the time pupils leave they have a wide knowledge of the risks they may encounter and how to assess and manage them. Behaviour over time has been outstanding. Incidents of bullying are rare and pupils know that they will be swiftly and effectively dealt with. Pupils have been given a good understanding of different types of bullying and how to deal with them. Parents and carers fully agree that their children are safe in school and have absolute confidence in staff to keep their children safe. Inspection findings fully endorse these views.

Pupils understand that good behaviour and consideration for others is the foundation of their happy, caring community. Their behaviour is courteous and thoughtful, showing a real awareness of the needs and rights of others. The school's strong faith ethos contributes much to pupils' understanding of how to be a good neighbour and citizen, so that pupils willingly take on responsibility for each other, improving the school and caring for the environment. Pupils attend regularly and are punctual.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers at all levels demonstrate the ambition, determination and expertise to continually improve the school. Roles and responsibilities are well delegated, and staff are extremely well supported to discharge their roles and develop their skills under the expert guidance of the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The passion for learning is evident across the school. The curriculum is outstanding. It has been developed through excellent teamwork, professional dialogue and the sharing of good practice between all staff. As a result pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and a tangible sense of the joy of learning pervades the school. Incisive and accurate evaluation, particularly of pupils' learning, provides the school with a clear picture of where improvement may be needed. Since the previous inspection, this has enabled the school to significantly improve the quality of teaching and the curriculum, maintain high standards of attainment, reduce the gap in attainment between significant groups and ensure that pupils' achievement is now outstanding. The school clearly demonstrates its excellent capacity for further improvement.

The governing body makes an outstanding contribution to the development of the school and holds it to account very well. Using their wide range of expertise, members of the governing body have given excellent support for its move to academy status in the near future. The governing body ensures that school policies are up to date and well implemented by staff. Pupils and staff are kept safe; discrimination in any form is not tolerated. The needs of all groups of pupils are known and very well met, so every pupil has equal access to all the school has to offer. Members of the governing body and staff make excellent links with parents and carers who are full of praise for how well their children are taught and cared for.

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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



27 January 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Benedict Biscop Church of England Aided Primary School, Sunderland, SR3 2RE

Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your lovely school. We were delighted to be allowed to join you in your learning, and to see and hear so many wonderful things about your school. Your behaviour and the care you show for each other are outstanding. They help you all to learn at a fast pace and to feel very safe and happy, so you make exceptional progress and achieve high standards in your learning. We could see that you all enjoy learning because your teachers make it so exciting and lots of fun. We were amazed by how much you learn in your lessons, by sharing your ideas and talents with each other and working flat out to please your teachers. No wonder your families and teachers are so proud of you!

You learn well because teaching is outstanding in the way it lets you learn together and from each other. Your teachers make sure they find out the things that interest you and plan all sorts of exciting activities for you to learn about these. We agree with your headteacher that the most important thing to improve next is the outdoor area for Nursery and Reception classes. You told us that you feel completely safe in school and that you trust teachers to look after you and to help you do your best. We saw that your teachers take the time to know you all extremely well and take excellent care of you, so that you can do your very best in all that you try. They make sure that by Year 6 you are capable, mature, caring young people who are extremely well prepared for the challenge of secondary school.

After two exciting days with you all we could see that Benedict Biscop is an outstanding school. Congratulations to you, your headteacher, teachers and governors for working so hard to make your school excellent in every way.

Yours sincerely

Moira Fitzpatrick
Lead Inspector

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