

St Andrew's Benn CE (Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130877
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	360146
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Charalambos Loizou HMI

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Alison Farnell
Headteacher	Mr Rod Steward (acting headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons and observed 10 teachers who were teaching at the time of the inspection. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils as well as speaking to some parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, the arrangements in place to safeguard pupils and looked at the improvement plan and self-evaluation, as well as assessment and tracking data that teachers use to monitor pupils' progress. Questionnaire returns from 116 parents and carers were analysed as well as returns from pupils and staff.

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

- The achievement of pupils in English, mathematics and science, and the impact of measures taken by the school to raise attainment.
- The impact of the teaching on pupils' progress over time and the extent to which the leadership team monitors and improves the quality of teaching and learning.
- The extent to which the school has improved assessment and teachers' marking since its last inspection.
- The effectiveness of intervention programmes and support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who join the school speaking English as an additional language.

Information about the school

This is an average size school with an Early Years Foundation Stage that comprises a Nursery class for three-year-olds who all attend part time, and two Reception classes for four-year-olds. The majority of pupils are White British and, increasingly, many pupils join the school from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. A high proportion of these speak English as an additional language with Portuguese, Polish or Urdu being the predominant home languages. In addition, a significant number of pupils join the school at different times of the year from abroad speaking a range of European, Asian or African languages. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above that of most schools and a higher than average percentage has a statement of special educational needs. The main areas of additional need include pupils with moderate or specific learning, or emotional and behavioural difficulties. The acting headteacher joined the school at the start of this school year and remains in post until the governing body appoints a substantive headteacher.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school has maintained a satisfactory education for its pupils since its last inspection despite the many challenges it has faced. Its pastoral support is strong and consequently pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and well-being are good. Teachers and support staff are very committed to pupils' all round development. This is reflected in the warm and positive relationships that exist between pupils and staff.

The leadership team and governing body have kept the school on an even keel during a period of rapid change in the community caused by significant inward migration in the local area. Consequently, the school has adapted its provision to serve the needs of pupils from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. To some extent it has done this successfully, as one pupil rightly explained, 'We welcome anyone from anywhere'. Although these challenges have placed greater demands on teachers and support staff, pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their starting points and attainment is broadly in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. Standards have fluctuated in the last three years, particularly in English, reflecting inconsistencies in the quality and effectiveness of the teaching. The teaching is satisfactory and there is enough good teaching to show that the school has the capacity to continue improving standards.

The majority of children join the Nursery or Reception classes with skills and aptitudes that are well below those expected for their age. Pupils in the early stages of learning English and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities require intensive support. These challenges have prompted teachers to adapt their teaching, support and curriculum to accommodate wide-ranging learning needs. Effective teaching and good care and support enable most pupils to make satisfactory progress. However, some pupils do not reach their full potential, especially in writing, because lessons do not allow enough time for pupils to edit or improve their independent writing, particularly in Key Stage 2. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children improve their knowledge of letters and sounds well but this is not being consolidated enough in their early writing skills to prepare them adequately for Years 1 and 2. As a result, pupils do not always spell, punctuate or structure sentences accurately enough which slows their progress in writing. Variations in pupils' progress and attainment are also affected by inconsistencies in teachers' assessments and the lack of precise learning targets for pupils to work towards. There are few opportunities for pupils to assess their own and others' work and limited scope in some lessons for pupils to work independently. The most effective teaching adapts to the needs of pupils across the ability range but this is not yet common practice.

The progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is checked regularly but the impact of the support provided is not being monitored with sufficient rigour. Consequently, there are variations in pupils' progress with some just falling short of their targets. Lessons are usually purposeful and engaging, although pupils learning

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English as an additional language are not always provided with resources to work independently. However, some teachers are beginning to provide bilingual resources and support which is helping pupils to play a full part in lessons.

Attendance rates are average although the school's systems for checking attendance are not robust enough to prevent some absences disrupting pupils' learning. Pupils feel safe and secure and parents and carers confirm that they are pleased with the care provided for their children. Pupils have a good understanding of how to adopt balanced eating habits and participate in many sports and activities to keep them fit and healthy.

The acting headteacher has made a good start in evaluating what needs to be done to sustain improvements. The deputy headteacher leads by example in managing and demonstrating good classroom practice. Governors provide satisfactory support, although play a limited role in evaluating the performance of the school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress pupils make in English to raise standards by:
 - linking children's knowledge of letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage to early writing skills
 - improving pupils' handwriting, spelling and punctuation, particularly in Key Stage 1
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length across a broader range of subjects and topics, and time to edit and improve their writing, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Improve teaching and learning to sustain a rise in attainment by:
 - ensuring that teachers use assessments of pupils' progress regularly to plan tasks that are better matched to the needs and abilities of all pupils
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to reflect and assess their own and others' learning to deepen their understanding
 - providing targets for pupils to work towards that help them to understand the next steps towards higher levels.
- Monitor the impact of teaching and support provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those learning English as an additional language more robustly to:
 - adapt resources and the deployment of support staff more flexibly and effectively to meet their specific learning needs
 - check pupils' learning regularly and intervene sooner if pupils are not making enough progress towards their targets.
- Ensure that more effective systems are put in place to sustain improvements to attendance and minimise the disruption of absence to pupils' learning.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The work seen in lessons and in pupils' mathematics and science books show that attainment is improving. There are improvements to attainment in English but progress in writing is uneven across classes. National tests results over the last three years show that some cohorts did not reach the standards expected in writing and standards were significantly below average. In reading, mathematics and science standards have been more typically average by the end of Year 6, reflecting satisfactory progress in relation to pupils' starting points. Progress measures between Key Stages 1 and 2 were average last year compared with schools nationally and standards, although fluctuating, are edging upwards.

Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory, including those at risk of displaying challenging behaviour, which is as a result of the effective support provided by learning mentors and teaching assistants. Pupils respect each other's views and behaviour in lessons is often good as they are attentive, responsive and keen to ask questions. They show initiative but in lessons, they do not have enough opportunities to work independently, share ideas, or reflect on their learning. Pupils feel safe and many have stated that they trust that adults will deal effectively with rare incidents of bullying. They know that their views are respected and their efforts valued and rewarded. School councillors, monitors and buddies are mature, and proudly wear their 'badge of office', taking their responsibilities seriously, for example, when organising charitable fund raising, caring for younger pupils, or representing the views of others. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to contribute to their local and wider community through links and visits to other schools. They understand the changing nature of their community, and are increasingly learning about the diversity of ethnic and cultural traditions. Pupils enjoy coming to school, although some families take extended holidays during term time or their children are repeatedly absent which disrupts their learning.

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

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

The pace of learning is satisfactory in most lessons with enough good teaching across the school to continue raising standards. Teachers plan their work so that pupils are provided with clear objectives for each lesson. However, some lessons do not incorporate enough work tailored specifically to meet the needs and abilities of all pupils. Teachers assess and check if pupils are on course to reach their learning targets, but this is not being done regularly enough to ensure that they are on course to reach their targets. Teachers mark pupils' work diligently but the advice and comments provided do not always refer pupils to their individual learning targets, making it difficult for them to assess how well they are doing or understand the next steps. In most lessons, class discussions are productive and stimulating but sometimes there is little time for more focused independent work to extend or deepen pupils' understanding.

Pupils who find learning difficult are supported by a skilled team of teaching assistants who provide good care and encouragement. Each stage of these pupils' progress is checked regularly but this is not rigorous enough to adapt interventions and programmes that ensure all pupils reach their targets. Overall, pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and integrate well in lessons, especially when encouraged to work with others, which improves their spoken English. Resources are sometimes provided, such as translated text or cue cards, but the quality and use of these varies as there is no common approach across classes resulting in variable progress.

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The curriculum includes topics for pupils to study that draw together a range of subjects with good opportunities to use information and communication technology, but less opportunity to write at length across a broad range of subjects. Topics incorporate a good range of visits to places of interest or outdoor team-building activities, as well as music and sport that broaden pupils' experiences and have a positive impact on their personal development. Pupils are encouraged, with good success, to care for the local environment, such as the work done in the well-resourced garden where pupils grow plants and vegetables. Pupils develop a range of core skills that prepare them adequately for the future.

There is strong pastoral support for pupils. The staff have well established partnerships and effective links with outside agencies and a local children's centre which offers additional welfare services and home links with families.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

In a short time, the acting headteacher has brought stability and sound judgement to the school. The deputy headteacher has worked effectively with staff during a period without a substantive headteacher. Consequently, the process of self-evaluation, audit and review is improving as it has not always been thorough enough, reflecting inconsistencies in pupils' learning. The governing body supports the school well, although has not been as involved to the same extent as senior staff in assessing and evaluating the school's performance. A good start has been made in setting out a more systematic structure to development planning and monitoring so that the school is now in a stronger position to identify the most important priorities for improvement.

Since the last inspection, refined assessment systems have contributed well to improving teachers' planning. Moderation meetings to look at pupils' work have improved teachers' understanding of assessment. However, there are some inconsistencies in the progress that pupils make because checking systems and reviews of progress are not robust enough to ensure that all pupils reach their learning targets.

The school listens to, and acts on, the views of its community, which accounts for the good level of satisfaction expressed in questionnaires. There is a commitment to inclusion and equality of opportunity, reflected most in the sensitive care and management of pupils with learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties. The school's contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils learn about the main world religions with opportunities for them to experience different cultural traditions and learn about the diversity of the community in the local area.

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At the time of the inspection all safeguarding requirements were being met in line with statutory requirements with appropriate arrangements in place to ensure that only suitable adults come into contact with pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although attainment is below that expected in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1, Nursery and Reception children make satisfactory progress. The staff provide a stimulating range of activities that broaden children's knowledge and understanding, laying secure foundations for their learning and development. The children settle quickly and make a good contribution to the setting when tidying away or getting themselves ready to play outdoors.

Children make good progress linking letters and sounds to words through songs, nursery rhymes and a wealth of story books. However, the staff do not always link these skills to writing, which slows children's early writing development. There are warm and trusting relationships where each child is valued and rewarded for good behaviour and effort. Assessments and observations of the children are carried out diligently but there is insufficient focus on what the children are learning, leaving uncertainty about the next steps or targets to work towards. Children explore and develop their physical and creative skills using different textures through colour mixing, drawing and painting. Nursery and Reception children benefit from working in the well-resourced and exciting outdoor and indoor areas safely and productively. Teachers' planning incorporates time for the children to work and play together during 'activate time', helping them to generate their own ideas and engage in different activities. This improves their confidence and independence. However, some children find it difficult to choose activities that will hold their attention for good periods of time, which does not sustain or extend their learning. The Early Years

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Foundation Stage is managed efficiently and the staff work cooperatively ensuring there is a smooth transition between Reception and Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Approximately half the parents and carers returned inspection questionnaires and the very large majority of these expressed mainly positive views. Parents and carers believe that their children are safe and that this is a caring and supportive school. A small number are concerned about pupils' behaviour and academic progress, which to some extent are justified given that there are relative weaknesses in the performance and progress of some pupils. However, behaviour is satisfactory, standards are rising and pupils enjoy their time in school. Most pupils and parents expressed satisfaction with the positive and highly supportive ethos engendered by the staff and some have commented on the engaging way the acting headteacher and staff welcome them to the school. Inspectors endorse comments by a small number who would like the school to inform them better about their children's learning, and with the pupils who believe that the staff could do more to help them understand their learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Andrew's Benn CofE (Voluntary Aided) 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 116 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 252 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	50	53	46	3	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	59	51	51	44	4	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	45	39	55	47	11	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	45	39	52	45	10	9	4	3
The teaching is good at this school	49	42	55	47	7	6	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	37	58	50	12	10	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	39	66	57	2	2	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)	30	26	59	51	10	9	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	32	66	57	6	5	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	29	53	46	15	13	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	25	54	47	16	14	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	32	28	64	55	11	9	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	48	49	42	6	5	2	2

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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:	<p>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.</p> <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.



1 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Andrew's Benn CofE (Voluntary Aided) Primary School, Warwickshire, CV21 3NX

Thank you for your help during the recent inspection, as well as the welcome and consideration you gave the inspectors. Inspectors have judged that you go to a satisfactory school and your teachers and support staff are helping you to improve your work towards higher standards. You are making satisfactory progress, especially in reading, mathematics and science. However, the inspectors have judged that the school could do more to continue raising standards in writing. The staff are helpful, sensitive and caring, and are genuinely interested in your welfare and achievements.

The acting headteacher, leadership team and governing body are managing the school to ensure that you continue to improve your work but there are some things that we have asked them and your teachers to do to make your school even better:

- provide you with better opportunities and targets to improve your writing, including for younger children when they learn their letters and sounds, and older children when writing independently
- plan lessons that will provide work that is always matched to your abilities; make more regular checks and assessments to make sure that you all reach your learning targets; and provide more time for you all to assess your work and reflect on your learning to deepen your understanding
- monitor the support provided for those pupils who find learning difficult and make sure they all do well to reach their targets; and also provide consistent support and resources for those children learning English as an additional language so they can work and learn independently in lessons
- improve systems to monitor and improve attendance rates to avoid any long term absence causing disruption to pupils' learning and progress.

You can all help too by continuing to try hard and making sure that you all come to school every day. I wish you all the very best.

Yours sincerely

Charalambos Loizou

Her Majesty's Inspector

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