

St Matthew's Bloxam CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130883
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	360148
Inspection dates	29–30 September 2010
Reporting inspector	Carol Worthington

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 of pupils on the school roll	249
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Margaret Pizzey
Headteacher	Sukie Owers
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 18 lessons; all 8 class teachers were seen at least once. Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, middle leaders, the vice-chair of the governing body, and two groups of pupils. Many pupils were spoken to informally. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at records of assessments of pupils' attainment, tracking of their progress and samples of their work in books. All safeguarding documents were scrutinised. Inspectors analysed 70 parents' and carers' questionnaire returns, together with those completed by all staff and all Key Stage 2 pupils.

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

- How effectively does the Early Years Foundation Stage provide a good grounding in early literacy and numeracy upon which to build in Key Stage 1?
- Is progress in mathematics consistent, and good enough throughout the school to maintain the improvement in attainment in the latest Key Stage 2 national tests?
- Do pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, but without statements, make good progress and attain high enough academic standards?
- How well do school leaders extend community cohesion beyond the school's immediate locality?

Information about the school

This average-sized school is in an urban setting. The majority of pupils are of White British origin, with an average proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds. Virtually all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than in most schools, including a high proportion of those with statements of need for a wide variety of specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A few pupils also have behavioural difficulties. Since its previous inspection, there have been significant changes in the school's intake, reflected in a dramatic increase in the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, which is now above average. School governors run daily after-school care provision, known as 'Building Blox'.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Matthew's Bloxam provides a good standard of education for its pupils. Academic standards shown by pupils' performance in national tests in English, mathematics and science are average in both Key Stages 1 and 2, but improving rapidly. Pupils' reading and writing develops well throughout the school and they use computers effectively in most areas of the curriculum. There has been particularly good improvement in mathematics in the past year and school records show that these are being maintained and built upon further. Attainment is above average in science and information and communication technology (ICT). A significant proportion of above average attainment was observed during the inspection. This results from the meticulous tracking of pupils' progress, which identifies early signs of underachievement and enables prompt action to be taken. Virtually all pupils make at least the progress expected of them from their starting points, and many exceed it. All groups of pupils achieve well. The school provides well for the needs of the greater than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. All such pupils, with or without statements, progress well and the majority attain standards close to those expected by the end of Key Stage 2. The very few who do not speak English fluently receive targeted support which enables them, too, to make good progress.

The school's ethos is apparent in all aspects of school life. The imaginative display of 'same but different' crosses in the entrance foyer illustrates how the diverse population is assimilated into the school's 'family' where everyone is equally valued. The school is highly inclusive and successfully places the promotion of equality of opportunity at the heart of its work. The high quality of pastoral care enables all pupils to feel exceptionally safe, knowing they always have someone to talk to, or can use the 'sanctuary' if they feel worried. Behaviour is excellent, both in and outside lessons. Pupils are polite and well-mannered and their excellent attitudes to learning have a very positive effect on their progress. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils learn through daily assemblies and reflection time to consider the wonders of the world and to respect each others' cultures and their environment. These qualities, and their rapidly improving academic standards, prepare them well for their future life.

Teaching and learning are good and pupils make good progress because of this. The teaching of English and literacy is particularly strong. Mathematics and numeracy are improving rapidly as a result of recent initiatives being undertaken in partnership with other local schools and this improvement is being sustained throughout the school. Literacy is particularly well developed in all areas of the curriculum, numeracy becoming more so. In most lessons, pupils are consistently challenged and successfully encouraged to work independently and in groups so that their learning flourishes. These features are less evident in the small minority of satisfactory lessons which are characterised by pupils spending too much time sitting still and listening. As a result, too few are actively involved,

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so they lose interest and progress is slower as the pace of the lesson decreases. Assessment is generally used well to determine the next steps for learning, and pupils are effectively involved in assessing their own learning in all classes.

The headteacher is an inspirational leader who has brought about many positive changes and created a climate for the school's continuing improvement. She and the deputy headteacher are a highly effective team whose skills complement each other. All members of staff share the leadership team's ambitions for success. They are well motivated and have high expectations, shared by pupils, and demonstrated by their pride in their appearance and very positive attitudes. The school's self-evaluation is thorough and results in the right priorities being identified for development. This has led to good improvements in pupils' achievement and progress, despite their starting points being lower than those at the time of the previous inspection. Challenging targets are set and invariably met or exceeded.

School leaders are highly committed to working in partnership and take a leading role in developing curriculum initiatives with local schools. These make an excellent contribution to pupils' good and rapidly improving achievements. The governing body holds the school effectively to account for its standards. First hand observations enable governors to play an informed role in school self-evaluation. They are highly effective in their management of the popular 'Building Blox' after-school provision. Because of the good improvements over the last few years in teaching, assessment, care and leadership, which have resulted in pupils' improved attainment and progress, the school is now in a good position to make further improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that the vast majority is good or better, by:
 - reducing the time that pupils spend as a whole class, listening to their teacher, when only a few pupils can respond to the teacher's questions
 - increasing the amount of challenging, independent and group work that pupils are expected to do.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enter the school with early skills and knowledge which are below the levels expected for their age. Children make good progress throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This is maintained and improved upon in Key Stage 2, where it is often excellent. The standard of written work is particularly high. Year 3 pupils of all abilities enthusiastically write at length, using a wide range of vocabulary and speech marks in their stories. All Year 6 pupils found an amazing variety of words to replace 'said' when writing a postcard from a World War 2 evacuee. In science, pupils studying the digestive system challenged themselves to complete their labelling of parts without looking at the one they had done with their teacher earlier. Younger pupils were making good progress in numeracy when working in groups, but this slowed when only a few of them were able to take part in an over-long carpet session. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported by well-qualified teaching assistants in and out of class. This extra support is also given to higher ability pupils, the very few who

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are not fluent in English and others identified, such as underachieving white boys. They all, regardless of gender or ethnicity, make accelerated progress as a result.

Most pupils take on some monitor responsibility in their classrooms and all have a voice in making decisions relating to their education and well-being through the school council. This and the eco-council are very influential in the school. Pupils show their concern for others through a wide range of charitable giving. They know how to live healthy lives by eating well and being active. They are well aware of 'stranger danger', internet safety and other potentially unsafe situations. Attendance is average, let down by a very small number of families who, despite the school's best efforts, do not regularly bring their children to school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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 quality of teaching and learning is good and there is a steadily improving trend. Warm relationships between teachers and pupils ensure there is an enjoyable learning environment. Expectations are high and, in the good or better lessons, all pupils are engaged in learning the whole way through and progress is rapid. In the satisfactory lessons observed, pupils spent too much time on the carpet, where only a few of them were able to contribute to this part of the lesson. Consequently, they became less attentive and the pace of learning slowed. When they became involved in paired or group work, able to make their own contribution, learning became quicker and progress greater.

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Teachers' marking is good, giving pupils praise and helpful comments on how to improve their work. Teachers make good use of assessment to plan lessons which challenge the full range of ability in the class and make sure that pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn.

The school has a good curriculum which is broad and balanced and is regularly monitored for its effectiveness. Use of literacy and ICT in the whole curriculum is well established, and numeracy improving through more planned opportunities. Teachers are increasingly linking subjects to provide exciting and stimulating activities, such as writing about the Romans meeting the Scots in an English lesson. The curriculum includes French and is enhanced by highly successful partnerships with local schools, including sport and many initiatives to raise achievement, such as 'Every Child a Writer' and 'Every Child a Counter', which have already improved attainment and progress in literacy and numeracy considerably. It is enriched by a wide range of after-school clubs, visitors and visits, including a residential experience in Year 6.

The school has exceptionally well-organised arrangements for the care of all pupils which result in their good and sometimes excellent personal development and well-being. There is outstanding support for pupils and their families who find themselves in vulnerable circumstances, including a sanctuary for quiet reflection or discussion. The school works outstandingly well in partnerships with outside agencies to help these children to overcome barriers to their learning. The after-school care is of high quality and is much enjoyed by those who attend. The parent support adviser is well used. Excellent advice is given to pupils and families when they enter or leave school, including home visits in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: 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?

School leaders and managers are highly successful in maintaining a strong sense of commitment to sustaining the ambitious targets set for all pupils. The high morale of staff and pupils is apparent throughout the school; all strongly believe in the school's success. Leadership and management responsibilities are effectively devolved to staff, and the rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning have resulted in rapid and sustained improvement. The effectiveness of the governing body is good. It ensures that all statutory requirements are met and is influential in deciding priorities for school improvement. Governors effectively run the high quality after-school care provision, 'Building Blox' which is valued highly by parents. The school leads other local schools in the implementation of curriculum initiatives, including training of staff.

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The school's procedures for safeguarding are good. It adopts recommended good practice and all members of staff are well trained in child protection procedures. There are well-developed quality assurance and risk assessments. Pupils and parents are very well aware of safety procedures and why they are in place.

There is a strong, shared commitment to equality of opportunity. The school's robust and comprehensive systems for tracking pupils' progress rapidly identify those who are underachieving. As a result of interventions, these pupils invariably make better progress and improve their attainment. Appropriate funding ensures that all children have the opportunity to take part in all activities, including trips and residential visits. The school works extremely hard with outside agencies to overcome the barriers to learning experienced by children who find themselves in vulnerable circumstances. Consequently, most pupils achieve well academically and very highly in some aspects of their personal development.

The school has analysed its religious, ethnic and socio-economic context and used this to promote community cohesion strongly within the school and in its outreach into the local community where it has strong partnerships with the church and other schools. It also engages with communities further afield and has effective plans to do more on a global scale. The impact of its work is felt strongly in school. In religious education, pupils freely discuss their different beliefs and customs, and pupils of different backgrounds get on well with each other.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	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

Good teaching by all adults who work with the children in the Nursery and Reception classes ensures that they make good progress, from their below, and often well below, expected starting points, and thoroughly enjoy learning. The majority of children attain

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the goals set for children of this age by the end of Reception, but a significant minority does not.

At the time of the inspection, Nursery children had only been in the setting for a short period, and some were in their first week, but many enjoyed painting and settling the toy guinea pigs in their straw. Older ones in Reception were already confident and happy in the secure and welcoming environment. They were familiar with the class routines, for example, independently taking their snack, and had obviously settled well. Their good social skills enabled them to initiate learning activities when playing amicably in small groups together, for example in the home corner, or with toy cars in the outside area. They enjoyed feeding the goldfish, and were able to count the food pellets when prompted by an adult.

Learning activities are well planned to cover all the areas of learning for this age group. They provide daily opportunities for early literacy to develop through learning letters and their sounds, and numeracy through focused counting activities. There are also many opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy through play, providing a good foundation for learning in Key Stage 1. The learning environment indoors is well equipped, but it is more limited outdoors. Although attractive and welcoming, there is currently little opportunity for free movement between the inside and outside area because the imminent refurbishment of the outdoor area limits the space available.

Good leadership ensures planning is thorough, with particular emphasis on personal and social development to help children settle in. Assessment is used effectively to match adult-led activities to the range of children's abilities. Assessment is good, but more rigorous in adult-led activities than in child-initiated ones. The safety and care of all children has a very high profile. Good relationships with parents and carers extend learning into children's homes.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
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 of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

In what was a fairly typical percentage return of questionnaires, parents and carers expressed overwhelmingly positive views about the school. Many wrote praising the school for its values and the quality of education. Typical comments included: 'the school is special and has a real family feeling', 'the school works hard to produce a happy working environment for my child' and 'all staff are very helpful and supportive in all matters'. Inspection evidence supports these positive comments.

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One or two individual concerns about pupils' progress, and ability not being recognised, should be taken up directly with the school.

A few parents would like the school to help with new mathematics methods, and this has been communicated to school leaders.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Matthew's Bloxam CofE 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 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 249 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	61	25	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	47	67	23	33	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	30	47	67	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	31	43	61	2	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	50	32	46	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	44	36	51	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	39	42	60	0	0	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)	22	31	42	60	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	25	36	39	56	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	41	39	56	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	40	38	54	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	35	50	31	44	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	54	31	44	1	1	0	0

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 Matthew's Bloxam CofE Primary School, Rugby, CV22 7AU

Thank you very much for being so helpful to us during our visit. We thought you were very polite and friendly and looked very smart. We found yours to be a good school, and here are some of the reasons.

Your headteacher and governing body run the school well and some aspects of leadership are excellent. Teaching is good so you do well, particularly in reading and writing, science and computer work. Your work in mathematics is improving. You particularly enjoy finding things out for yourselves and work well together in groups. You make less progress when you have to sit still and listen for too long, even though your behaviour remains excellent. You are proud of your school and you all get on very well with each other. All these things prepare you well for secondary school.

All the adults take exceptionally good care of you. You care about others, so you raise a lot of money for charity. You can always talk to someone if you have problems. You learn how to keep yourselves safe and have definite opinions about many aspects of your education, which you express through your school and eco- councils.

You have good links with the church and other schools nearby and are well thought of in the local community. You enjoy learning about each others' beliefs and customs.

All the adults in your school want it to be even better, so they are going to make sure some of you don't spend too much time on the carpet, but do more work independently and in groups

You can help by making sure you come to school every day to work hard and do your best.

Yours sincerely

Carol Worthington

Lead inspector

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