

St Philip's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109152
Local Authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	356484
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Ian Hancock HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	269
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Yme Potjewijd
Headteacher	Andrew Joy
Date of previous school inspection	15 July 2008
School address	Bloomfield Rise Bath BA2 2BN
Telephone number	01225 837946
Fax number	01225 835815
Email address	mail@stphilips-school.org

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	9–10 March 2011
Inspection number	356484

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 11 teachers, visited 16 lessons or part lessons and held discussions with governors, staff, parents and carers and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation including the school's analysis of pupils' attainment and the progress they make, data on attendance, evidence of leaders' monitoring and evaluation and plans for improvement. Inspectors analysed 102 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as 154 questionnaires from pupils and 16 from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well assessment information and the setting of targets are used to support pupils' learning.
- How successfully leaders and managers have improved the quality of teaching.
- The balance of activities led by adults and those initiated or chosen by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

The school is slightly larger than the average. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. A small, but increasing, number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, as is the proportion with a statement of special educational needs. Since its last inspection, the school has gained the Activemark, the International School award ? intermediate level, the ECO-Schools Bronze award, and a Next Generation Learning award for information and communication technology.

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

This is a good school that has improved considerably since the last inspection when its overall effectiveness was judged to be satisfactory. There are several main reasons for the improvement. Leaders and managers at all levels have raised expectations and played their part in securing the necessary changes. The quality of teaching has improved as result of a comprehensive programme of staff training and detailed monitoring. Assessment information is being used rigorously to inform lessons, monitor progress and hold teachers to account. Finally, the school has developed a more engaging curriculum that is making a stronger contribution to pupils' learning. Consequently, standards have risen and rates of progress have improved across the school, so that pupils' achievement is good.

The proportions of pupils that reach and exceed the expected levels at the end of both key stages are above average. Pupils' work in books and the school's own assessment information confirm that these higher standards are being sustained. While the majority of pupils make good progress, there remains some unevenness across subjects and year groups. The school is aware of this and has already taken prompt action in response.

Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching they receive. The school has made good use of the expertise of its own staff and consultants from the local authority to develop a number of strengths in teaching. For example, teachers provide clear explanations when responding to misconceptions and make effective use of questioning to deepen understanding and challenge individuals. Pupils have recognised the improvements and report that they learn a lot in lessons. However, the good features of most lessons are not always present in others. This accounts for the small variations in pupils' progress. While there are some excellent examples of informative marking in books and of pupils evaluating their learning against success criteria or their targets, these examples are not sufficiently established in the majority of lessons. Consequently, the extent to which assessment supports learning is satisfactory rather than good.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress in their overall development. They make good progress in the development of their communication, language and literacy skills and in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because of the effective approach to the acquisition of early language skills and the prompt identification of those requiring extra support. However, there are insufficient opportunities for children to become active, independent learners and adults do not always seize opportunities to promote children's independence.

The school's caring, Christian ethos makes a significant contribution to the strong sense of community. The high-quality relationships and pupils' good behaviour create a harmonious atmosphere in lessons and assemblies. The quality of care for pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable is of a high standard. One questionnaire response commented

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

positively on the 'patience and skill' of staff and another on the 'high standard of care'. These views are representative of many parents and carers who returned the questionnaire and are similar to those of the inspection team.

The headteacher, governing body and wider leadership team have a well-informed view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their shared vision, high ambition and success in implementing effective changes to raise achievement since the last inspection demonstrate good capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012, ensure the identified good features in teaching are firmly established in all lessons, so that pupils' good progress is consistently maintained across all subjects and year groups.
- Improve the way in which assessment is used to support learning by:
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to be involved in evaluating their own work and that of others so that they have a better understanding of what is required
 - ensuring that marking in books gives clear guidance so that pupils understand the next steps to take
 - strengthening the link between pupils' targets and their learning in lessons.
- By July 2012, ensure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in all aspects of their development by:
 - increasing the opportunities for active, independent learning and problem solving
 - ensuring that questions and interactions by adults are fully utilised to develop children's independence
 - increasing the use of the outdoor area.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils work enthusiastically in pairs and small groups when collaborating on shared tasks. Their good behaviour and the positive relationships between adults and pupils contribute much to the working atmosphere of lessons. Work in books is carefully presented and well organised, reflecting the school's high expectations and strong sense of pride. Pupils enjoy learning because teachers frequently make sessions fun and exciting. As a result, pupils achieve well. Adults know pupils well and use this knowledge effectively to ensure they are suitably challenged. A noticeable example was seen in a Year 6 literacy lesson on the use of powerful verbs and adverbs. Pupils were enthralled as the class teacher made excellent use of a film clip to extend their choice of words and improve their writing. In this lesson, the skilful use of adult support and targeted supplementary questions ensured that each pupil was challenged at their own level and achieved well.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because of the skilled and caring support they receive from adults and the well-planned programmes to meet their specific needs. Higher-attaining pupils achieve equally well as demonstrated by the increasing proportions of pupils who reach the higher levels at the end of both key stages.

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

The wider personal development and well-being of pupils are equally strong. Pupils talk knowledgably about ways to improve their own health and that of others, and they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Pupils are curious about the world around them and are enthused by new experiences such as visits to other schools, the nearby church and places of historical interest. The school's promotion of Christian principles and common values equips pupils with a deep sense of belonging and responsibility towards others. The community spirit is particularly noticeable when adults and pupils come together in assemblies and at events such as the early morning fitness club. However, the lack of a link to a contrasting locality in the United Kingdom means that pupils' cultural development is not as strong as their spiritual, moral and social development.

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	2
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	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 school's investment in training can be seen in teachers' good command of subject knowledge and the improving trend of achievement. The school has drawn on the individual expertise of its staff to good effect. Learning is enjoyable because teachers make lessons fun and involve pupils in lively activities. In most lessons, explanations by adults are short and their questioning moves learning on at a brisk pace. As a result of the high level of challenge, all pupils make good progress throughout the lesson. However,

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

progress is noticeably slower in a minority of lessons where these features are not present.

There are some good examples of teachers' comments in books, identifying clear steps for improvement. Where pupils are involved in evaluating their own work and that of others, they have a better understanding of what is required. However, the picture is not consistent across all classes. Too often assessment is not used precisely enough to move learning on and pupils are not sufficiently clear of the link between their targets and learning in lessons.

The school has developed an engaging curriculum that is making a stronger contribution to pupils' learning. Strong links with local secondary schools help pupils prepare for the next phase of their education and provide access to specialist teaching in drama, design and technology, and sport. There are increasing opportunities for pupils to apply basic skills in other subjects. However, these are more developed in English and using new technologies than in mathematics. Learning experiences are enriched by a range of after-school clubs, 'themed' days and visits to local facilities. Pupils welcome the changes and report their learning is more relevant and exciting.

Parents and carers praise the good quality of pastoral care their children receive and the school's efforts to support those with specific medical needs. When problems arise, pupils have confidence in the adults around them to listen to their concerns. Rigorous monitoring systems ensure that the progress of those who experience barriers to their learning or attendance is carefully tracked and frequently reviewed. Consequently, absences have reduced and attendance rates are in line with those of other schools. The well-organised arrangements to prepare pupils for the next phase of their education enable them to continue their learning journey with minimum disruption.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The overwhelming majority of pupils believe that senior leaders do a good job. The school's recent success has stemmed from the industrious leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by other staff and the governing body. The school has invested in its middle leaders so they now play a greater role in driving improvements. Ambition is high and actions to improve teaching have been pursued with vigour. The careful tracking of progress and the use of this information to plan future learning are key factors in raising achievement. The school pays close attention to promoting equality and takes prompt action in response to those at risk of underachievement. For example, concerns regarding the rates of progress of some pupils in Year 5 have led to the provision of additional

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

individual teaching and the implementation of a film-making project to improve boys' writing.

The astute and committed leadership of the governing body provides effective challenge and support. Training has been well utilised to ensure statutory responsibilities are met, and the governing body confidently holds the school to account.

Procedures to keep pupils safe are robust and meet all statutory requirements. Roles and responsibilities are clear and are well supported by regular training. The school knows its context well and has audited its work to promote pupils' understanding of other communities. While pupils are able to interact with communities in the immediate locality and abroad, there are limited opportunities to develop pupils' understanding of a modern multicultural United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children typically start school with similar levels of development to those found in other settings, although some specific skills are lower than those typically expected for their age, such as in communication, language and literacy development. Secure relationships are built with parents and carers to ensure a smooth start to school. Individual needs are quickly assessed and those requiring additional help are well supported by suitably trained staff. Children's safety and welfare are given high priority so that requirements are met. Specialist expertise, such as in the use of story boards, makes a strong contribution to children's learning in sessions. As a result, children settle quickly into the safe, caring environment and make satisfactory progress.

While the activities led by adults involve a range of approaches that capture the interests of the children, there is not enough learning that children initiate for themselves.

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

Observations and assessments reflect the imbalance, which leads adults to miss opportunities to promote independent learning and thinking. Children enjoy using the spacious, well-resourced outside area which provides valuable opportunities for robust physical activities to help them to be healthy. However, it is underused so that the full benefits of the space in contributing to all areas of children's learning are not sufficiently realised.

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

The overwhelming majority of questionnaire responses presented a very positive view of the school. Similar sentiments were expressed by parents and carers who spoke with inspectors during the inspection. The school's actions to ensure that pupils enjoy school, are kept safe and learn to adopt a healthy lifestyle received the highest levels of agreement. A few negative comments were received. These were brought to the school's attention and where appropriate are reflected in the report.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Philip's Church of England 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 102 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 269 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	72	71	27	26	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	66	65	35	34	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	46	45	52	51	3	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	49	49	48	3	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	55	44	43	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	44	54	53	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	43	57	56	1	1	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	29	60	59	5	5	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	45	44	52	51	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	41	40	53	52	5	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	29	62	61	9	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	37	36	60	59	5	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	64	63	35	34	2	2	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



11 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Philip's Church of England Primary School, Bath BA2 2BN

Thank you for making us welcome when we inspected your school recently. It was good to meet and talk with many of you. We were grateful that so many of you took the time to complete the questionnaire. We read every one of them.

We have found that your school is a good school and here are some of the reasons why.

- Your headteacher and other adults have worked really hard to improve the school.
- You make good progress in your learning and more of you reach the standards expected for your age than in other schools.
- You have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves safe and choose a healthy lifestyle.
- Good teaching in most lessons means you enjoy learning and take pride in your work.
- Adults in the school take good care of you.

We have asked your teachers to make sure that all of your lessons are as good as the best ones. We have also asked them to make changes to the way your work is assessed so that you have a better understanding of what is required and know how you can improve your work. We have asked the adults who work in Robin and Jay classes to make some changes. These changes will give the youngest children more choices and enable them to do more for themselves.

You can help by taking up the opportunities to assess your own work and by thinking carefully how you can improve your work. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Ian Hancock

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.