

St Botolph's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120159
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	358705
Inspection dates	8–9 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Susan Walsh

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–10
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	208
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sam Francis
Headteacher	Emma Pepper
Date of previous school inspection	29 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 16 lessons or parts of lessons led by nine different teachers. They also looked at the work of higher-level teaching assistants. Meetings were held with staff, governors and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at the school's development plans, the school's records of pupils' progress and samples of pupils' work in English and mathematics. They scrutinised 91 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, as well as questionnaires from pupils and staff.

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

- What is the current rate of progress for pupils in Key Stage 2, especially in writing and mathematics?
- How well is assessment used to inform pupils' learning?
- How much do the pupils know about other cultures, and how are they enabled to contribute to the wider community?

Information about the school

The school is average in size for a primary school. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and none are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils identified as having a special educational needs and/or disabilities is average but there are a small number of pupils with particularly complex needs. Recently more pupils than usual have joined the school partway through their primary school education. The pupils transfer to the local high school at the end of Year 5. The headteacher is in her second year of headship and is supported by two assistant headteachers. A new teacher has been appointed in Key Stage 2.

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 Botolph's Church of England Primary School is a good school. It has improved many aspects of its work since the previous inspection. Parents and carers frequently comment about the 'supportive and approachable staff'. They appreciate the good quality of care, guidance and support that the school provides, especially for those pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Parents and carers say that pupils who join the school partway through the year receive a warm welcome and settle in quickly.

Children get off to a good start in the Reception classes because they offer a stimulating environment that ensures that children enjoy their learning. Pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 1. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in reading. However, until recently, their progress in writing and mathematics has been satisfactory but inconsistent because the quality of presentation, the pace at which pupils work and the accuracy of spellings have been variable. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 5 attainment is broadly in line with national expectations and pupils have achieved well from their individual starting points. Teaching is usually good and most lessons are well organised and promote good learning. Intermittently teachers in Key Stage 2 are not sufficiently clear about what they expect pupils to learn. Moreover, the work set is sometimes not finely matched to individual needs when pupils are taught English and mathematics in ability sets in Key Stage 2. Occasionally marking and the setting of academic targets do not provide pupils with sufficiently clear information about how to improve their work. However, the school has already started to improve the way that assessment is used in lessons to promote learning and this is rapidly accelerating pupils' progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. The curriculum has improved substantially and now encourages the development of creativity and provides pupils with more opportunities to learn about different faiths and cultures. Occasionally there are insufficient opportunities for older pupils to write at length in English lessons, and too much use of worksheets in mathematics lessons means that pupils sometimes do not have to think enough when calculating.

The headteacher and other senior leaders make an effective team and have had a significant impact on school improvement. They share with the staff a strong sense of purpose, and an ambitious vision for the school. Leaders have a secure view of the school's overarching strengths and weaknesses. They collect extensive performance data but the results are too complicated to provide a consistently clear overview of pupils' progress, and this particularly restricts the way that the governing body is able to challenge the school's performance. The quality of teaching is regularly checked by the senior management team, but their checks sometimes focus too much on teaching strategies rather than the progress made by pupils. Nevertheless, the successful use of additional programmes of support has ensured that fewer pupils are falling behind and the

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identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has become more accurate. The school has a good capacity for further sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate pupils' progress in writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 by:
 - ensuring that standards of presentation and spelling are consistently high and that a good volume of work is produced in all classes
 - making certain that pupils have ample opportunities to write at length in English lessons
 - reducing the use of worksheets so that pupils have sufficient opportunities to record their own mathematical calculations.
- Make more effective use of assessment to support learning by:
 - making certain that teachers are always crystal clear about what they expect pupils to learn in all lessons
 - ensuring that the work set is always carefully matched to pupils' individual needs when they are taught in ability sets
 - using marking and the setting of academic targets more effectively in order to make sure that pupils always know exactly how to improve their work.
- Enhance the quality of self-evaluation by:
 - Using data to provide a sharper focus on pupils' progress over time
 - making certain that effective links are always made between teaching and learning when lessons are monitored
 - developing the ability of the governing body to challenge the school as well as providing support.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils in Key Stage 1 make constantly good progress. The relative weaknesses in pupils' reading and writing skills when they join Year 1 are quickly addressed, and many pupils are producing lengthy and very well presented pieces of interesting and engaging writing by the end of Year 2. The progress of pupils in Key Stage 2 has been satisfactory but is now rapidly accelerating because pupils are being set more challenging work and expectations are rising. For example, when pupils in Year 5 were set the task of writing instructions for a card game they responded with great enthusiasm because the task had been presented in an interesting way and they knew exactly what they needed to do to produce good quality work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive carefully tailored support. This support is often from skilled teaching assistants who thoroughly understand the pupils' needs, including the needs of those with the most complex requirements. They work well to keep pupils interested and involved in lessons.

Pupils of all ages are keen to work hard and do their best. They enjoy their learning, work effectively as teams both in and out of lessons and get on well together. They are developing good levels of self-discipline and have a very clear understanding of the

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difference between right and wrong. Consequently, their behaviour is good. Pupils say that fallings out are rare. They report that teachers are very good at helping them to resolve any problems. The importance of a healthy diet is recognised and pupils are keen to take part in sport. The school council is actively involved in promoting healthy eating. Pupils are eager to take on responsibilities and are enthusiastic about their roles as Eco Councillors and Playground Pals. Opportunities to contribute to the local community have improved and as well as taking part in various charity events the school has recently put on its own carnival in the locality. Pupils have been very appreciative of the opportunities to learn more about other faiths and cultures. They are confident and articulate and have made good progress in developing their basic skills. This means that pupils are well placed for future success.

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	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?

Much of the teaching is good, particularly in the Reception classes and in Key Stage 1, because teachers have good subject knowledge and use a good range of engaging strategies and techniques that promote good learning. The quality of teaching has been more inconsistent in Key Stage 2 and this has resulted in uneven patterns of progress. However, the appointment of new staff has led to swift improvements in Key Stage 2. Relationships are warm and supportive and give pupils confidence. The use of assessment is improving and many teachers plan work that matches the needs of the pupils, but

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occasionally pupils of different abilities within English and numeracy sets in Key Stage 2 are provided with very similar work, and this sometimes restricts the progress of the more-able pupils. The work set for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are exceptionally gifted is usually well matched to their individual needs. Skilled teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning and along with the majority of teachers are good at reshaping explanations and moving pupils' learning on. Some good marking provides pupils with clear guidance about how to improve their work but this is not consistent, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils are provided with academic targets but these are not consistently referred to in lessons.

The curriculum is increasingly creative and makes a particularly good contribution to pupils' personal development. The interesting topics and good range of visits are often used as a successful stimulus for writing, although in a minority of English lessons in Key Stage 2 the tasks set involve producing a relatively small amount of writing. There is often a good range of activities in mathematics lessons, including some worthwhile opportunities to learn through practical investigation. Pupils appreciate the theme weeks such as 'faith week' which have greatly enhanced their appreciation of other faiths and cultures. The school provides extensive extra-curricular opportunities and ensures that they are carefully tailored to the needs and interests of all pupils. For example, a Street Dance Club has been recently introduced to complement the wide range of sporting activities that are available.

The school provides a very welcoming and cheerful environment where pupils feel confident and safe. Well-targeted support is offered to pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This includes additional support and information for parents and carers, which are greatly appreciated by those involved. Good cooperative working with other agencies as well as good quality additional academic and personal support in school allows each pupil to make the best of the opportunities provided. Transition arrangements are good. They ensure that pupils move smoothly through the school and look forward to the next stage of their education.

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?

Senior leaders, class teachers and the governing body are single-minded in their determination to secure a high quality education for all pupils, and they work well with other local schools to promote continuous improvement to the quality of provision. Many areas of the school's work are well managed, including support for pupils with special

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educational needs and/or disabilities, the Early Years Foundation Stage and pastoral support. There is a good commitment to promoting equal opportunities and all groups of pupils achieve well. The school gathers a plethora of data including regular checks on the impact of support strategies and the progress of different groups of pupils, and careful tracking of the steps forward made by individual pupils ensures that those who are in danger of falling behind have access to effective programmes of support. However, some of the whole-school data that is produced is too complex and does not provide a clear overview of progress over time. Occasionally the school's judgements about its work are too positive. This is because links are not always made between the quality of teaching observed and the outcomes for pupils. Although there is a substantial amount of good teaching the school knows that assessment is not always used effectively to inform learning and has already started to work on improving this.

Governance is satisfactory and improving. The governing body is very supportive of the school and increasingly involved in its work. However, it is not yet sufficiently well informed to ask probing questions about the quality of the school's work. Safeguarding procedures are good. The school is rigorous in the way it makes sure pupils are safe and secure. The school's contribution to community cohesion has improved and is now good. It understands its own context well and has good links with the local community, including hard-to-reach families. Engagement with the wider community is improving and the school works hard to make pupils aware of and tolerant to people who are different from themselves.

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	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

When children start in the Reception classes they are articulate and confident but many have weak early literacy and numeracy skills. They make good progress, especially in their

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personal, social and emotional development, but in most years boys leave the Reception class with skills that are still relatively weak in reading and writing. Children really take pleasure in their time in the Reception classes because the activities that are planned are exciting and have been closely matched to their interests. For example, the hide, provided in connection with the current topic on animals, gave children the opportunity to watch real birds outside through child-sized binoculars and use bird identification charts. This improved their knowledge and understanding while encouraging early reading skills. It was well used and greatly enjoyed by children. The outdoors is now being used well to extend learning opportunities and during the inspection there was an imaginative game that encouraged children to write lists and especially caught the attention of boys. Good opportunities are also provided for children to practise letter formation and recognition and to develop the dexterity needed for writing, but staff know that they are not yet sufficiently boosting the quality of boys' writing. Adults have good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn. They use good questioning skills in order to develop children's understanding of concepts but also encourage a good level of independence. Good leadership and management are exemplified by good teamwork and the way staff continuously develop their skills. Links with parents and carers are good, and they are right to be confident that their children are well cared for.

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

The vast majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were very pleased with the quality of education provided by the school. There were many positive comments relating to supportive teachers and the helpful headteacher. Parents and carers were especially pleased with provision in the Reception class and Key Stage 1, and many wrote to say how much their children enjoyed school. They raised a small number of individual issues, which were followed up during the inspection but represented no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Botolph'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 91 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 208 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	71	24	26	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	75	82	16	18	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	58	64	31	34	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	60	66	29	32	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	62	68	28	31	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	62	68	26	29	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	65	29	32	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)	56	62	30	33	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	68	24	26	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	58	33	36	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	52	57	36	40	1	1	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	58	64	32	35	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	65	71	24	26	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.



10 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Botolph's Church of England Primary School, Loughborough, LE12 9DN

Thank you for being so friendly when my colleagues and I visited your school. We felt very welcome. You go to a good school where there are many interesting things for you to do. The recent carnival looked like great fun. We were very impressed by your good behaviour and by the way you all get on so well together. You go on many exciting trips and it's clear that you learned an awful lot about different faiths and cultures during the recent faith week. We were also pleased that you know such a lot about internet safety.

By the end of Year 5, you have made good progress in developing your key skills in English and mathematics. We really enjoyed reading the writing of pupils in Key Stage 1, especially the stories about the dragon. However, we did notice that pupils in Key Stage 2 made more uneven progress in their writing and mathematics lessons than younger pupils. This was because not enough tidy work was produced in lessons or words were not always spelt correctly. In some mathematics lessons there were too many worksheets used and pupils did not always have the opportunity to record their own work. Your teachers work hard and teaching in most classes is good. From time to time teachers are not totally clear about what they expect you to learn in lessons. You are sometimes all set the same work when you are taught English and mathematics in sets in Key Stage 2. We have asked your teachers to adapt this so you are all challenged at just the right level, and to always give you clear guidance about how to improve your work. You can help by never being afraid to ask for help if you get stuck.

We noted that you are looked after very well at school. Leaders, managers and governors are working hard to improve your school and are doing a good job but we have asked them to improve some aspects of their work. This includes improving the way they make some checks on teaching and the way that they process data.

Yours sincerely

Susan Walsh

Lead inspector

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