

St Bartholomew's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105237
Local Authority	Bolton
Inspection number	355733
Inspection dates	25–26 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Geoffrey Yates

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	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jane Caldwell
Headteacher	Mr Gareth Robertshaw
Date of previous school inspection	17 March 2009
School address	The Fairways Westthoughton, Bolton Lancashire BL5 3NZ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eleven lessons were observed, taught by eight teachers. The inspectors held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the tracking of pupils' progress and the school's monitoring, self-evaluation and planning for improvement. The inspectors also analysed 92 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

- Has the school ensured that achievement, as pupils move through the school, continues to be at least good?
- How well the outside area in the Early Years Foundation Stage is planned and organised to meet children's needs.
- How successful the school is in ensuring pupils use their basic skills well in other subjects.
- Is the provision made for pupils' personal development better than good?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school in which the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The school has gained many awards, including the Healthy School award. The school changed its name, as from September 2010, from that of Westhoughton Parochial Church of England School to its present title.

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

Saint Bartholomew's is a good school. Under the strong leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher the school has improved year-on-year, resulting in attainment in English and mathematics being above average by the time pupils leave. Pupils' achievement is good and overall outcomes for pupils are outstanding because of the many excellent aspects of their personal development and the outstanding care, guidance and support for pupils. Parents and carers think highly of the school. The school is a very harmonious community where no form of discrimination is tolerated. Pupils have an excellent understanding of healthy lifestyles and of feeling safe. Their contribution to the school and the community is outstanding.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from their broadly typical starting points and achieve well. As a result, they enter Year 1 with skills that are above average. Pupils continue to make good progress in the rest of the school. This comes about from good teaching and a curriculum that meets their needs and interests. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their classmates as a result of very effective interventions.

Teaching is good. It is outstanding in some classes. Teachers have a good understanding of what pupils know and can do, and provide engaging activities that are matched well to pupils' learning needs. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their above average attendance and in their excellent behaviour. Opportunities are sometimes missed to use marking and target-setting effectively and there is some variation in the pace of lessons, resulting in some pupils not always making the gains in learning expected of them. The good curriculum includes an interesting and varied programme of activities to make learning fun. However, the school has identified rightly that opportunities are missed for pupils to use and develop their information and communication technology skills and writing skills in subjects across the curriculum.

Leadership and management are of a good quality. Self-evaluation is accurate and leads to effective planning for development. Regular reviews of learning for each year group ensure that all teachers are accountable for pupils' progress. The impact of this work can be seen in rising standards in both key stages in the last three years. The roles of middle leaders and that of the business manager have been developed well. The school benefits well from the work of the governing body, whose members keep a close eye on provision and outcomes. Together with leaders at all levels they are committed to the vision for excellence. The capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the effectiveness of teaching by:

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- ensuring that all lessons move at a brisk pace
- ensuring that teachers' marking and the targets set for pupils consistently help pupils to improve further.
- Improve curriculum planning so that pupils are given good and frequent opportunities to use their information and communication technology skills and writing skills in subjects across the curriculum.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils learn and achieve well in lessons because they enjoy the challenges that teachers provide and are keen to contribute their ideas, knowing fully that teachers will listen and respond. They are very attentive, extremely hard working and keen to do their best. They work well with each other and this helps their clarity of thinking as well as developing their language and communication skills. For example, the talk partner work in Year 1 to promote the use of adjectives resulted in the following example being agreed by two pupils: 'My pirate ship will have an amazing, astounding flag.' In Year 6, excellent teaching motivated pupils to talk confidently about the use of personification and onomatopoeia in improving their descriptive writing. A well-written design brief for a piece of outdoor clothing produced by one pupil included the remark: 'This jacket has to be durable and waterproof.'

Pupils enter Year 1 with attainment which is above that expected for their age. By the end of Year 6 they attain above average standards in mathematics and English. There has been an upward trend in results, and current standards remain above average. The progress of different groups of pupils is checked very thoroughly and intervention strategies ensure no group is underachieving.

Pupils are very proud of what they do. They are keen to show their work to approved visitors to the school and are a delight to talk to. Pupils demonstrate their firm commitment to healthy lifestyles through participation in sporting activities and healthy choices of food. They have a good understanding of the variety of cultures represented within the school but are less sure about the diversity of cultures beyond their own community. Pupils display a high level of respect for one another and their teachers and have a very strong sense of right and wrong. They are fully confident that there is no bullying but are aware of who to talk to if needs be. They contribute willingly to help those less fortunate than themselves. They take time to reflect on their own actions and regularly help one another in class and around the school. Pupils' enjoyment of school is confirmed by the excellent questionnaire response from parents and carers with regard to this issue. The school council provides a voice for pupils to have a say in everyday matters. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, for example taking charge of the school office at lunchtime, which they do exceedingly well.

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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	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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	2
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 quality of teaching is good and leads to pupils making good progress. Teachers successfully engage and motivate pupils through challenging questions. For example, in a Year 5 numeracy lesson pupils were very keen to use and apply their numeracy skills in solving problems using fractions. Where teaching is occasionally less strong, the pace of lessons slows because there is some over direction. Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of pupils, although this is not always translated into ensuring that pupils' attention is drawn to their targets or that errors noted in marking are followed up by pupils.

The curriculum is good and meets pupils' needs well. The use of the 'Challenge Zone' in Key Stage 1 ensures pupils are given very good opportunities to use and develop their basic skills. However, across the school in topic work and other subject areas, opportunities are missed for pupils to use and apply their information and communication technology skills and their writing skills. Pupils clearly enjoy what the curriculum has to offer, particularly music. A wide range of extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum and taken together contributes very well to pupils' personal development. The school attaches a strong importance to its Christian status and this results in the work produced in this aspect being of good quality.

Staff know pupils and their families exceptionally well and partnerships with parents and outside agencies play an important part in ensuring the needs of all pupils are fully met.

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Teachers give frequent praise to pupils and show concerned care for them. All pupils are guided and supported exceptionally well. There are excellent links with the pre-school providers and with the local secondary school to ensure transfer periods are as stress free as possible. Very strong procedures are in place to ensure attendance is above average and punctuality is good. Well-planned, effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is a strong feature of the care, guidance and support provided by staff.

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?

The school's Christian foundation informs its strong commitment to success for all pupils. The results of the good overall leadership and management are that effective action has been taken to address issues, such as the need to accelerate the progress of pupils in mathematics in some age groups, and in ensuring that the ageing building provides a very safe environment. The quality of teaching is carefully monitored and outcomes are shared and fed into performance management targets. High expectations are set for everyone. There is a strong focus on raising achievement and improving provision to the best it can be. Drive and ambition are shared and embedded so that the school's aim for its pupils, 'fun and achieve,' is undoubtedly met.

The governing body supports the school and holds its leaders to account well. Members of the governing body are effective because they are fully involved in all decision making and regularly visit the school. The governors have developed their own highly useful handbook. Arrangements for keeping pupils safe are of a good quality. Child protection training is fully up to date and procedures and policies follow best practice, evident in all aspects of the school's work. The school has a strong commitment to inclusion and leaders and the governing body promote it exceedingly well and are very active in tackling any form of discrimination. Any inconsistencies in performance are addressed through intervention strategies. Community cohesion is promoted well, based on an analysis of the area the school serves. However, the work done in raising awareness of communities in the rest of the United Kingdom is still a work in progress. Excellent partnerships with outside organisations provide experiences the school alone cannot.

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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	1
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

Children make good progress because the staff pay close attention to developing their skills. Children are given outstanding opportunities to develop their early writing skills. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and exceed age-related expectations by the time they move to Year 1. High quality care and very good relationships ensure children make a happy start in school. They settle quickly, and are eager to investigate all the activities on offer. While there is a good range of activities in most areas of learning, opportunities for children to develop their information and communication technology skills are planned less well. Children clearly feel safe and secure, work hard and behave very well, sharing equipment and taking turns. They rapidly gain in confidence, select activities and materials independently and concentrate well on their tasks. Good teaching ensures a well-planned range of activities. The outdoor area, although limited in space, is used regularly and enjoyed by children. For example, the 'pirate treasure hunt' provided a good opportunity for children to develop their investigative and early writing skills. One child looking at a picture of Captain Hook and the hook at the end of his arm, made a good attempt at spelling the word by writing huk. However, opportunities for children to develop their physical skills in the outdoor area are limited because of the lack of space. Good leadership has ensured all welfare and Early Years Foundation Stage requirements are fully implemented. Progress is carefully monitored to plan the next steps in learning, and to ensure the needs of every child are met.

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

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

Around 44% of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. They hold very positive views of the school. Very few parents and carers expressed concerns about different aspects of the school's work. The inspection team discussed the concerns with school leaders and were satisfied with the responses. Inspection judgements support the positive views expressed by the vast majority in the questionnaire responses.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Bartholomew's 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 92 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 206 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	75	82	17	18	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	72	78	20	22	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	69	75	22	24	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	70	76	22	24	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	68	74	23	25	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	64	70	28	30	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	58	63	34	37	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)	59	64	28	30	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	64	70	26	28	1	1	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	58	63	30	33	1	1	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	60	33	36	1	1	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	77	84	14	15	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	76	83	13	14	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



27 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Bartholomew's CofE Primary School, Bolton, BL5 3NZ

Thank you for the wonderful, friendly welcome you gave to all the inspection team during the recent inspection of your school. It was a real pleasure to meet you and see you at work and play. I agree with your school that it provides you with a good standard of education with many aspects better than that. The care, guidance and support your school provides for you are excellent. This level of care helps you feel very safe and valued. You all get on together really well and your behaviour is excellent. This helps make your school a happy place to be. It was a real pleasure to hear you sing and I am sorry that I am going to miss your end of term production. From what I heard about last year's show, it is going to be excellent.

Your school is always looking for ways to make things better for you, so to help it do this, there are two things I am asking your school to do:

- Make sure that marking helps you to improve your work and, when you have targets set, that they are followed up. We have also asked that, like in many of your lessons, there is a brisk pace in all lessons.
- Find ways to ensure you use your information and communication technology skills and writing skills well in subjects across the curriculum.

I know you will all continue to work hard to play your part in making sure your school becomes even better.

I wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Geoff Yates
Lead inspector

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