

Berrow Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123807
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	359520
Inspection dates	9–10 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Laurie Lewin

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Chambers
Headteacher	Heather Hector
Date of previous school inspection	4 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Eighteen lessons were observed and eight teachers were seen. The inspectors met with pupils, staff, parents and carers, and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school documentation including teachers' planning, assessment information and safeguarding policies; they also scrutinised samples of pupils' work. The inspectors analysed questionnaires from 129 parents and carers, 86 pupils and 23 staff.

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

- How well do boys progress across the school?
- How well do pupils progress in writing?
- How accurately do teachers set targets for pupils' performance?
- How effectively do subject leaders carry out their roles?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school. It serves the local area, with some pupils coming from outside the immediate catchment area. The overall proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. Nearly all of the pupils are White British, with a very small number coming from other ethnic backgrounds. The school has eight classes, one of which is for Pre-school age group children and one of which is for Reception age group children. The Pre-school class was set up by the school in September 2009 and this was inspected as part of the overall school provision. The school is accredited with the Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark. The school provides breakfast club and after-school care facilities for pupils.

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. Pupils enjoy their time here and their attendance is above average. Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage where they are taught well and make good progress. Throughout the rest of the school, good teaching results in pupils achieving above average levels of attainment by the end of Year 6. Staff have very good relationships with all pupils and use these well to encourage all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to become confident and enthusiastic learners. Teachers provide interesting lessons, incorporating a good range of practical activities to boost pupils' learning. They support each other well and develop positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are very healthy and fit. As part of the drive to gain the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark, the school involves pupils in a wide range of sports, ensures all individuals learn how to eat healthy foods, and has a wide range of health-promoting activities such as gardening. Pupils make a very strong contribution to the immediate and wider community. For example, they worked closely with the local council to improve park facilities. Very good links with schools in other parts of England and overseas help pupils gain an excellent understanding about how people from different ethnic backgrounds live their lives. Through these involvements and charity fund-raising, pupils gain a very sensitive awareness of both local and global issues, and an excellent understanding about how their contribution can make a very real difference to improving the world.

In the main, teachers work well to ensure that pupils of all abilities make good progress in their work. However, very occasionally, where teaching is satisfactory, more-able pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by the work provided and do not progress as rapidly as they should. Although pupils achieve well in most areas of their work, attainment in writing is not as good as in reading and mathematics. Pupils do not always have enough chances to write for specific purposes and different audiences.

The excellent provision for care, guidance and support ensures that all pupils feel completely safe. They have no hesitation in seeking help should they need it. Pupils spoken to all agreed with one who said 'Everybody is really friendly in our school?it's always easy to talk to the adults.' Staff are very good at encouraging good behaviour and ensuring pupils feel confident to express their views. As a result, pupils' behaviour is good and sometimes exemplary, and they show an excellent level of moral and social awareness. Very strong support provided for pupils with social and emotional difficulties ensures the individuals concerned maintain their progress and become confident learners.

The headteacher does a good job of leading the staff. She has implemented a range of successful measures over the last few years that have helped staff make significant improvements to the attainment and progress of the pupils. She ensures that staff and the governing body are fully involved in supporting all aspects of the school's improvement.

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Through robust monitoring, the governing body has a very clear overview of the effectiveness of all school provision. Governors do an outstanding job of supporting the headteacher and staff as well as holding them to account to ensure that all new initiatives make a full impact on improving the school. The school's accurate self-evaluation, strong commitment of all staff and the good rate of improvement since the last inspection mean that it has a good capacity to keep improving.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attainment in writing by July 2012 through ensuring that pupils in all classes have frequent opportunities to write for specific purposes and audiences.
- Where teaching is satisfactory, improve it to a good or better level by July 2012 through ensuring that more-able pupils are always given tasks that challenge them and that enable them to progress rapidly.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

When they start school, children mainly show the same range of skills and knowledge that match the expected levels for their age. On entry, their attainment in communication, language and numeracy is often below the expected levels. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and attain average levels in all areas of learning, with a significant number of children reaching above average levels by the time they start Year 1. The good progress and achievement continues across the school. In the main, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve well by the end of Year 6. In lessons seen, boys and girls progressed equally well. In mathematics, pupils across the school use and apply their mathematical skills well in problem-solving and practical activities. For example, Year 6 pupils confidently puzzled out number patterns in the Fibonacci sequence. Pupils also become confident and good readers. While pupils produce some good writing across the school, they do not do as well in this area as in reading and mathematics. They are not always as confident or as skilled as they should be in writing for specific purposes and different audiences. Pupils usually take pride in the presentation of their work. However, their handwriting is not always as good as it should be and many older pupils do not consistently join their writing. Overall, pupils develop good basic skills to help them progress in the future. They learn to apply these skills in a wide range of activities across the curriculum and to work together well in groups or independently. For example, in an excellent Year 3 art lesson, pupils developed good social skills working in teams to design a 'useful robot', carefully allocating drawing, note-taking and other tasks between team members.

Through the work they do in personal, social and health education lessons, pupils gain an outstanding knowledge about what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and apply this knowledge very well in their everyday lives. They are fully involved in helping to make their school and local community a safe place; as seen, for example, in their campaign to ensure safer play equipment in the local park. Through the work of their school council, pupils have very good opportunities to voice their opinions and bring about school improvements. For example, as a result of their actions, the school has improved the facilities available at break-times. Parents and carers are confident that their children are very safe. Pupils are proud of their school and talk enthusiastically about their successes in sports activities and other events.

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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	2
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	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?

Teachers use a good range of strategies to help pupils learn in different ways. For example, in a good mathematics lesson in Year 6, the teacher skilfully used a range of visual prompts, discussion work and information and communication technology resources to enable all pupils to rapidly cover the problem-solving work. Teachers make learning fun for the pupils wherever possible. For instance, in a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, all individuals were very motivated by the way the teacher set the format of the work on probability to run as a game. In almost all lessons, teachers make good use of assessment information to help them plan work that matches the needs of all individuals. Teaching assistants work well to support the teachers and the pupils. Very occasionally, where teaching is satisfactory, activities are not matched precisely enough to the needs of the more able pupils. Sometimes, this is because too long is spent on a whole-class activity, with all pupils working at the same level of challenge. Some good techniques are employed to improve pupils' writing skills, for example regular, intensive, short independent writing sessions in Year 3, and play script and film review writing in lessons seen for older pupils. However, writing activities such as these, which focus on writing for specific purposes, are not carried out on a sufficiently frequent basis in many classes across the school.

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The curriculum incorporates a wide range of interesting topics, which pupils thoroughly enjoy and which are equally appealing to boys and girls. Much good work is also done to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who, as a result, apply themselves well to all tasks. The school's curriculum provision is enriched well through the good range of trips, visitors, links with other partner organisations and extra-curricular activities. Good provision is made for activities that cater specifically for gifted and talented pupils. The breakfast club and after-school care club are good facilities that enhance pupils' learning and help boost good relationships between home and school.

Staff have an excellent understanding of pupils' pastoral needs and cater for these fully and sensitively. They work very well together to ensure there is a caring and happy atmosphere in which all pupils develop confidently. Where needed, full use is made of external agencies to support pupils' needs. Systems for staff to regularly discuss pupils' needs with each other mean that staff have a very detailed knowledge of the needs of all individuals in their care. They are quick to react and put the necessary extra support in place if they see any individuals falling behind or encountering problems.

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 headteacher, staff and governors work closely together to ensure that provision and pupils' achievement is constantly improved. For example, the establishment of the Pre-school facility in recent times has made a strong impact on boosting children's attainment in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The headteacher, well supported by her senior management team, has worked hard with teachers to sharpen procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Using the information gained, teachers set precise targets for pupils' achievement. This has led to improved teaching across the school and significant improvement to the attainment and progress of the pupils. The close monitoring of pupils' progress ensures that all individuals are helped to be successful and that no discrimination occurs. Lessons are regularly monitored by the headteacher and senior staff. They make good use of all information gained to help staff improve the quality of teaching. Subject leaders carry out their roles well and have an accurate overview of pupils' attainment and progress across the school in their subjects. However, the school is aware of the fact that subject leaders have not yet had sufficient opportunities to share and discuss with staff the areas of good practice observed around the school.

The school works well to maintain good relationships with parents and carers. Their views are regularly surveyed and acted on where appropriate. They are kept fully informed

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about their children's progress and given good opportunities to involve themselves in supporting their children's learning.

The governing body is exceptionally well organised and fully involved in all self-evaluation and strategic planning. Governors have a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and are very proactive in helping staff seek ways to keep the school improving. They ensure that good provision for safeguarding is underpinned by clear systems for risk assessment, good security for the site, rigorous procedures to ensure pupils and staff are kept safe, and thorough training for staff and governors. The school has good links with other schools and partner organisations and uses these well to boost pupils' learning. The school's provision for promoting community cohesion is good with effective plans constructed that help the school to engage with a range of community groups beyond the school and the immediate community. The pupils' strong awareness, through their charity fund-raising work, of the plight of other people around the world is one of many examples of the school's successful impact with promoting community cohesion.

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	1
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

The Pre-school and Reception classrooms are lively and attractive areas with a rich range of interesting resources and activities laid out to engage children's interest and inspire an enthusiastic approach to learning. Staff work together as a strong team and provide excellent care, guidance and support for all individuals. As a result, children are happy and confident learners who enjoy all activities. For example, Pre-school children enjoyed one lesson outside matching their collection of gingerbread men to the correct number sign. Similarly, while working indoors, they were amazed by the smell of fresh ginger. This prompted a good deal of lively conversation with comments such as 'It reminds me of the

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gingerbread men we made.' Lessons are well planned to take account of previous learning. For example, Reception class children worked well on a variety of practical activities following up previous work where they had read the story about the gingerbread man with their teacher. Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour. As a result, behaviour is excellent and children usually show good concentration with all tasks provided. Teachers use assessment information well to inform their planning so that tasks match children's needs well. Children's competent skills are well grounded in a confident approach acquired through the wide range of practical exploration and investigation provided. However, there are not always enough chances for children to carry out creative activities independently.

Within the good curriculum, children acquire a very good understanding of how to stay healthy and fit, with very good routines established to help them understand the need for personal hygiene; for example the need to regularly wash their hands. The two classrooms have good access to a spacious and well-laid-out outdoor area where the children work and play happily and safely. However, some of the equipment outside is rather worn and unattractive. Staff recognise that, due to the constraints of the current equipment, children do not have access to as wide a range of outdoor physical activity as they should do.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. The addition of the Pre-school class since the last inspection means that the children's start to school life has been very much improved and enriched. The close working partnership between the Pre-school class and the Reception class has resulted in a seamless transition from the early years setting to school. The Pre-school provision meets with the requirements of registration. The self-evaluation is accurate and good plans are in place to keep provision improving at a good pace.

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

There was a high return of questionnaires. Most parents and carers who responded indicated that they are happy overall with their children's experience at school. In particular, almost all of them agreed that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps parents and carers well informed about their children's progress. The level of negative responses was low. A very small minority of parents and carers did not agree that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors looked at this area and found that good systems are in place to encourage good behaviour and that pupils' behaviour is good across the school. A very small minority of parents and carers did

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not agree that the school takes account of their suggestions or concerns. Inspectors judged during this inspection that the staff and governors have good systems in place to consider the views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Berrow 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 129 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 231 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	73	57	51	40	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	83	64	36	28	5	4	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	73	57	46	36	3	2	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	62	48	52	40	4	3	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	64	50	51	40	6	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	66	51	50	39	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	46	57	44	6	5	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)	64	50	49	38	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	59	46	59	46	3	2	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	36	54	42	12	9	8	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	53	41	54	42	10	8	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	70	54	41	32	9	7	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	72	56	45	35	6	5	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.



13 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Berrow Church of England Primary School, Berrow TA8 2LJ

Thank you for making us feel welcome at your school. We have judged that yours is a good school. Through talking to you and through the questionnaires you completed, we know that there are many things that you like about your school.

Here are some of the good things that we found in your school:

- You make a good start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- We can see that you enjoy school a lot and the well-planned curriculum makes sure you get lots of interesting activities to take part in.
- You are very fit and healthy and know a lot about how to stay this way.
- Good teaching helps you to do well and your teachers work hard to make your lessons interesting and fun.
- Your behaviour is good and you have good attitudes towards learning.
- You all have an excellent understanding about how to stay safe. The adults in the school do an outstanding job of taking care of you.
- The headteacher, staff and governing body have done well to improve your school and they work hard to make sure it keeps improving.

This is what we have asked the school to do now:

- Ensure that those of you who learn quickly are always given challenging work.
- Help you improve your writing by giving you more chances to write for specific purposes and for different individuals or groups of people who may read your work.

All of you can play an important part in helping the school to improve by continuing to work hard in all lessons.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lewin
Lead inspector

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