

St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School Aided

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108615
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	377785
Inspection dates	04–05 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Frank Cain

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	224
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Lee
Headteacher	Gillian Surtees
Date of previous school inspection	19 May 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 12 lessons or parts of lessons taught by eight different teachers and looked at pupils' work. Discussions took place with governors, members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at documents, including policies relating to safeguarding, the most recent School Improvement Partner report and self-evaluation records, reports to the governing body and the school's own assessment data. The inspectors analyzed questionnaires from pupils and staff as well as those from 119 parents and carers.

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

- The current attainment and progress of pupils, including significant groups, as they move through the school.
- The accuracy with which the school assesses pupils' attainment and progress.
- The accuracy with which the school judges the quality of teaching and learning.
- The extent to which leaders and managers contribute to the overall effectiveness of the school.
- The reasons the school succeeds in having such high levels of attendance.

Information about the school

St Bartholomew's is a smaller-than-average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. A very small minority are from minority ethnic groups. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is also below average. The school has received enhanced Healthy School status. There have been significant staffing changes, including three new appointments to the teaching staff in the last 18 months.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

St Bartholomew's is a satisfactory school. Pupils' good outcomes in their personal development are key strengths of the school and help explain the excellent support given to it by parents and carers. One typical parental view was that the school is 'a friendly and nurturing place'. The attendance of pupils is consistently high compared to schools nationally. This is due in part to the school's extremely strong, caring ethos but also to the good-quality care, guidance and support it provides and to the outstanding parental engagement. Behaviour in classrooms and around the school is good. Pupils work and play together happily. They feel safe in school and always feel that they have someone to turn to if they need help. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is consistently good. The introduction since the previous inspection of the International Primary Curriculum is making learning more fun and exciting for pupils.

Children enter the Nursery with attainment that is broadly at the level expected for their age. Progress throughout the school is satisfactory overall but uneven. Progress is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 but slows in Key Stage 2 because teaching in this key stage is sometimes not as strong. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average. Teachers plan work to match pupils' learning needs and in the more effective lessons this provides suitable levels of challenge for different groups of pupils. However, in other lessons pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the learning activities provided. In addition, teachers do not consistently use written feedback to give pupils a clear idea of how to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support programmes put in place for them.

The school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory and becoming stronger. This is partly due to recent appointments which have begun to strengthen monitoring procedures and which, as a result, offer some opportunities for teachers to improve their practice. However, subject leaders only have limited opportunities to monitor and help improve the quality of provision in their subjects. Self-evaluation is increasingly accurate and is enabling leaders to identify and address weaknesses. As a result, the quality of teaching is improving but there are still areas of inconsistency that adversely affect pupils' attainment and the rate of progress. The governing body offers good support to school leaders but does not yet challenge them robustly enough.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress and raise attainment, especially at Key Stage 2, by:
 - consistently and accurately matching activities in lessons to pupils' learning needs so they are challenged to achieve well
 - consistently providing pupils with written feedback through marking, incorporating well-defined next steps for improvement
 - developing a more systematic approach to using assessment to improve the quality of learning during lessons by enabling pupils to assess their own work and that of others.
- Sharpen whole-school approaches to self-evaluation in order to quicken the rate of improvement by:
 - giving subject leaders sufficient opportunities to monitor teaching in their subjects and provide teachers with guidance to improve their practice
 - ensuring the governing body provides robust challenge to school leaders.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In lessons pupils are keen, work well and enjoy learning, especially where teaching provides them with the right degree of challenge to learn. Pupils' progress, however, is varied as in some lessons, particularly in Key Stage 2, the work provided is less challenging for some pupils. Analysis of school data shows that pupils' progress, overall, is now improving. Inspection findings support this view. Attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly average although boys do slightly less well than girls.

Pupils' behaviour is consistently good. They are friendly and helpful to each other as they move around the school. There are very few incidents of poor behaviour and there have been no exclusions for seven years. Pupils are closely involved with their school and wider community. They have an active school council which organises fundraising events and have a choir which performs at events within the local community, for example at Whitley Bay Playhouse. In school pupils work very well with each other in a cooperative way and develop good social skills, as well as growing in confidence and perseverance when tackling their work. Their good moral and social skills were evident, for example, when they showed great respect for others in an assembly which stressed the importance of friendship. Attendance is high and punctuality is excellent.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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]/[skills] that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

While the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall it varies across the school. Where teaching is good, tasks are well structured and challenging for all groups of pupils so they make good progress. Where teaching is less effective, the pace of lessons is slower and at times pupils are not stretched enough by tasks appropriate to their ability. Teachers' planning is developing and more attention is being given to the use of assessment in this process through a formal system of assessing pupils' progress. Marking is satisfactory but it is not always consistent in giving pupils advice on what they need to do to improve their work and move to the next stage in their learning. Some examples of good assessment for learning were seen with pupils involved in assessing their own understanding but this is not consistent across the school and opportunities are missed for pupils to assess each other's work.

The revised curriculum is popular with parents and carers as well as with pupils. For example, one parent commented that the pupils were 'enjoying an exciting curriculum'. Pupils supported this view, one commenting that the experiments in science were 'cool'. During the inspection Year 1 pupils visited a local optician as part of their work on 'senses' and returned enthusiastic about what they saw, felt, smelled and heard on their journey. Their experiences were then skillfully exploited by the teacher in a lesson based on the theme they were studying. Already the curriculum is having a positive effect on outcomes for pupils' personal development but it is too soon for its effect on pupils' academic attainment to be fully evident.

The caring Christian ethos of the school is reflected in positive relationships between adults and pupils and the strong personal development outcomes shown by the overwhelming majority of pupils. There is a welcoming environment for parents and carers. The school can demonstrate that it not only identifies potentially vulnerable children but also effectively puts in place effective intervention strategies and support to help them.

¹The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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?

Staff are now settled and have a common sense of purpose which is increasingly focused on improving pupils’ performance. More rigorous monitoring of key subject areas to improve consistency in teaching is now taking place although subject leaders’ involvement in observing lessons has yet to be fully developed. The headteacher is taking positive action to secure improvement by developing an accurate system for assessing teachers’ performance. The governing body is highly committed to the school. Its members take their responsibilities seriously and are very visible in the school community but it does not yet offer sufficient challenge to school leaders through its monitoring of policies and procedures.

The school promotes equal opportunity satisfactorily but there are some slight inconsistencies in the performance of boys compared with girls and between classes because sometimes work is not sufficiently challenging. Safeguarding is satisfactory and all legal requirements are met. Pupils and parents and carers are very happy that all in school are safe. The support of parents and carers at the school is a great strength of St Bartholomew’s. There are over a hundred parents and carers who volunteer to help in school as well as on visits and this contributes very positively to pupils’ learning and well-being. Responses to the parental questionnaire also show a great deal of support for the school. The school evaluates the impact of its planning to promote community cohesion. Besides visitors from other faiths, it has welcomed pupils from other faiths to become members of its community. It has very strong links with a local Roman Catholic school. It also has links with a school in Botswana.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

When they start school in the Nursery class children settle quickly, confidently and happily in the warm, caring environment the setting provides. Children whose circumstances make them potentially more vulnerable are particularly well supported. As children develop, most make good progress towards the goals expected of them. They behave well and display a positive approach to their learning. Staff encourage children to take a lead in their own learning and they are increasingly confident explaining things for themselves, as some did, for example, when using a camera to photograph the sky and clouds. Opportunities for children to pursue their curiosity when outdoors are, however, less evident in the Reception class.

Children are encouraged to develop their early reading and writing skills by being given an interesting range of activities to practise these skills, for example reading a restaurant menu before ordering a pizza with the 'waitress' writing down the order. There are very positive relationships with parents and carers, with many taking part in early morning reading practice in the Nursery library, for example. Welfare requirements are met well, including rigorous daily hygiene rules. Leadership and management are well focused on helping children to make good progress.

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 in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Over half the parents and carers of pupils on roll responded to the inspection questionnaire. They were overwhelming in their support for the school and all thought their children enjoyed school and were safe there. The view of one parent reflected the general feeling in writing that the school provides 'an excellent start to lifelong learning' with 'loving and dedicated staff'. Overall, parents were happy that teaching was good and that the pupils were making good progress. A small minority, however, expressed in writing some concern that progress in Key Stage 2 was not as positive as in Key Stage 1. Inspection findings support this view. Inspectors found much to support parents' and carers' positive views and these are reflected in the report, although inspection findings are that teaching and progress are satisfactory overall rather than good. There was no pattern to the other very small number of negative views expressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School Aided 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 119 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 224 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	82	69	37	31	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	91	76	28	24	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	60	50	52	44	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	60	50	46	39	6	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	60	50	51	43	4	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	47	56	47	6	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	71	60	47	39	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)	64	54	50	42	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	52	44	57	48	7	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	63	53	46	39	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	58	49	48	40	4	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	77	65	39	33	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	88	74	28	24	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 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.



6 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School Aided,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE12 8AE**

I want to thank all of you for the extremely friendly welcome that you gave us when we inspected your school. We found the time we spent talking to you, your teachers and other adults extremely enjoyable and rewarding. We were very impressed by your excellent behaviour and your keenness to learn in lessons. Your attendance and the support that your parents and carers give to the school are outstanding. You clearly like school and the exciting learning experiences you tell us it gives you. You feel safe and find the teachers help and care for you and that they work hard. You appreciate how the headteacher leads the school and feel that you can turn to her or other adults for help if you need it.

In order to help you make even better progress and to improve the school further, we have asked the school's leaders, teachers and governors to:

- make sure that the activities you are given in lessons always challenge you to learn as well as you can
- make sure your teachers always provide you with the information you need to improve when they mark your work
- give you the chance to check regularly for yourselves how well you are learning
- ask those teachers who are subject leaders to help other teachers in their subjects when they can
- make sure that the governing body checks closely with school leaders that your school is improving as well as it should.

I am sure you will all help make your school better by continuing to work hard and play together well.

Yours sincerely

Frank Cain
Lead Inspector

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