

Saint Barnabas Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103412
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	376896
Inspection dates	5–6 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Alison Cogher

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	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michelle Wake
Headteacher	Heather Powell
Date of previous school inspection	14 December 2006
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons and observed eight teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher and other teaching and support staff, pupils and members of the governing body. Pupils' current and past work was scrutinised and the school's assessment data relating to pupils' progress and attainment was analysed. Inspectors also looked at school documentation including curriculum planning, information provided for parents and carers and evidence used to inform the school's self-evaluation. The questionnaire responses from staff, pupils and 62 parents and carers were analysed.

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

- How well do pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress, and is it as good as that made by other pupils?
- What is the extent of pupils' knowledge and understanding of global diversity?
- How well are parents and carers enabled to work with the school to support their children's learning?
- What is the extent of pupils' contribution to the development of the curriculum?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school serving an urban area on the northern edge of the city of Birmingham. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and an average proportion speak English as an additional language. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is also below average. There are more boys than girls in the school and in some year groups the imbalance is significant. The school has been accredited with Healthy Schools status.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Saint Barnabas Church of England Primary School is outstanding. It supports pupils to live the values of Saint Barnabas by successfully promoting equality, courage, excellence, determination, respect and friendship. Within this exceptionally caring and positive environment pupils develop a very clear set of personal values that enable them to work in harmony and greatly enjoy their learning. They grow into confident individuals and contribute significantly to the unity of the school community. Improvements since the previous inspection have been secured in the overall quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage, teaching and the curriculum. Pupils recognise and value the recent changes to the planning of the curriculum and report that they thoroughly enjoy learning through topics because it 'makes learning fun'. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire confirmed the very positive views expressed by pupils and the inspection team's findings.

Pupils develop a 'can do' attitude to learning because of outstanding teaching and the school's very inclusive ethos. They receive the support and challenge they need to achieve their individual targets for improvement. Teachers frequently check pupils' knowledge and understanding in lessons and move quickly to correct any misunderstandings and to plug gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills. Lesson planning takes full account of pupils' individual needs and as a result, all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make excellent progress. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Attainment in Year 6 in English and mathematics is significantly above average and pupils' achievement is outstanding. They are polite, courteous and work extremely hard in lessons. They work confidently on their own and cooperatively when in pairs and small groups. Attendance rates are high and pupils report that they feel very safe at school and that the behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is excellent. Pupils are very aware of the benefits of a healthy diet and enjoy immensely the opportunities provided by the school to pursue an active lifestyle. They are very keen to take on responsibilities and carry out their roles such as school or class councillors and house captains with maturity and commitment.

The strong leadership of the headteacher has secured a widely shared commitment to continuous improvement. Staff are a highly reflective team who support each other to improve by sharing expertise and ideas for improvement. School self-evaluation is accurate and based on a range of detailed monitoring evidence.

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Challenging targets are used well to sustain pupils' high attainment and rigorous monitoring has ensured that in the very large majority of lessons teaching is exemplary. These very strong features demonstrate the school's outstanding capacity to improve further.

Governance is good and improving. Excellent partnerships forged with the Church, other schools, and organisations and businesses in the local and wider community provide pupils with opportunities that the school could not provide by itself. These serve to enrich and extend pupils' learning in many ways. International links are less well developed but the school has appropriate plans to expand them. A good range of procedures are employed to keep parents and carers informed about school activities and what their children are learning in school. To strengthen this aspect further the school has plans to broaden the information it produces and to provide hands-on experiences for parents and carers through curriculum workshops. The school regularly canvasses parents and carers to seek their views and ideas but is not systematic in the way it gathers information or records and reports back its findings.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop and strengthen links with parents and carers by:
 - expanding the information they receive, so they are in a better position to support their child's learning at home
 - employing more methodical procedures when seeking their views and in the recording and reporting back of the findings of consultations.
- Press ahead with the plans to forge links with schools in other countries to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of global diversity.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Children start in the Nursery with skills that are broadly at the levels expected nationally for their age. They make exceptional progress and most exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave Reception. Very thorough tracking of pupils' progress ensures that additional support or challenge is accurately targeted so pupils make the best possible progress in lessons and over time. Pupils show a real excitement for their learning. For example, in a Year 2 class pupils particularly enjoyed helping Samuel Pepys (the class teaching assistant in role) to improve his diary entries about the Great Fire of London. Samuel was very concerned that the words he was using lacked flair and he sought pupils' help to find more interesting descriptive vocabulary. Stimulating resources such as paintings of the fire, paper that crackled when handled and the use of thesauruses enabled pupils to succeed in their task. Their improvements included changing the word 'bright' to 'glittering' and 'hot' to 'roasting'.

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Pupils show a good deal of respect for each other and adults, and listen carefully during discussions and questions and answer sessions. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary, so no learning time is lost and lunch and break-times are enjoyable social occasions. Pupils’ understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a wide range of circumstances is extremely good. For example, they are fully aware of the level of protection provided by wearing high-visibility jackets when they walk to venues in the community. Older pupils encourage younger ones to lead a healthy lifestyle by sharing the benefits of a balanced diet. As one Year 5 pupil was heard to say to a Reception pupil at lunchtime, ‘Eat up your vegetables if you want to be strong when you grow up.’ Pupils work with their teachers to raise questions that guide their investigations during topic work. This increases pupils’ ownership of their learning and makes a strong contribution to their extremely positive attitudes and independence. Pupils vote to choose the charities they wish to support, and make and sell products to raise money. This work, together with the links to businesses and banks in the community, helps pupils develop an understanding of the democratic process, the principles of profit and loss and money management. Pupils’ enjoyment of school and their outstanding personal development and high attainment prepare them extremely well for the next stage of their education and their future economic well-being.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Teachers make excellent use of a wide range of resources, including the school’s outdoor spaces, to motivate and engage pupils. Activities are varied and pupils are

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

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eager to be involved, showing a determination to complete the tasks set as well as they can. Relationships are extremely productive and there is a real sense of purpose in classrooms. Skilled, well-briefed teaching assistants make a significant contribution to pupils’ learning in lessons. Pupils are given clear instructions so know what they need to do to succeed. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and any pupil errors are tackled quickly during lessons or through very thorough marking of their work. Pupils are guided to assess their own work, which strengthens their ownership of the learning process. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn as well as other pupils because a wide range of resources are used imaginatively, work is tailored to their needs and they receive precisely focused adult guidance and support. This ensures they succeed as they take small measured steps towards achieving their individual goals.

Opportunities to investigate and solve problems are key features of the curriculum that support pupils’ learning very well. Connections made between subjects are extensive and provide pupils with a context for their learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 studying the Second World War considered what vocabulary would be best to use when describing a range of emotions after considering varied scenes from the book *Goodnight Mr Tom*. The use of information and communication technology is firmly embedded across different subjects and pupils use it with confidence as a tool to support their learning. A wide range of stimulating enrichment activities, including sport and visits to places in the community, extend and enrich pupils’ experiences very well.

The school is very inclusive and the diversity of pupils’ backgrounds is celebrated. Pupils are known as individuals and receive outstanding levels of care, guidance and support. Access to the learning mentor and the firmly established very close relationships with a range of agencies ensure pupils receive extra support when they need it. Pupils spoken to during the inspection expressed high levels of confidence in the school’s procedures to ensure their safety and well-being.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, staff and the governing body share a clear vision for the school’s future development. Teamwork is extremely strong and this ensures that aspects of the school’s work identified for improvement are tackled quickly. Parents and carers are consulted about proposed changes and their views and ideas are valued,

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although procedures to collect and collate these and for reporting back are not consistent. The involvement of parents and carers in their child’s learning is strongly encouraged and the school is seeking to widen the information it provides so they can engage in this partnership even more. The governing body provides constructive support and challenge for the school. It is developing strategies to gather more first-hand information to complement that provided by the headteacher and other staff, so it is better placed to contribute effectively to school self-evaluation. The governing body ensures that safeguarding is outstanding. Practice exceeds the recommended good practice guidelines in a number of aspects, such as the number of staff and governors trained in key areas. Expectations are very well understood by governors and staff, and are consistently implemented and monitored for impact. This results in the high levels of confidence expressed by parents and carers that their children are safe at school, and pupils’ own sense of being very safe at school.

Very thorough monitoring of pupils’ progress means that the school is very successful in ensuring that all groups of pupils make similarly outstanding progress and achieve extremely well. This demonstrates the school’s highly effective promotion of equality of opportunity for pupils. The school is a highly cohesive community and has very strong connections within the local area. Links are established with a contrasting school in the United Kingdom but international links are in the early stages of being established. The school makes imaginative use of its resources and deploys support staff very well to enable pupils to achieve extremely well, and so provides exceedingly good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Very strong leadership has secured improvements in the quality and consistency of

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teaching and the curriculum. Teamwork is very strong and all adults have an extremely good knowledge of how to meet the welfare and learning needs of young children. Very effective induction procedures ensure children settle happily and confidently into both the Nursery and Reception classes. Excellent use is made of very thorough assessment information and a very good understanding of children’s interests and previous experiences to guide the planning of activities. Consequently, children are motivated to be involved and learn extremely well through investigation and experimentation. For example, in the Nursery, they explore pattern by layering coloured sands in transparent containers and they explore the theme of autumn as they use magnifying lenses to closely observe autumn leaves, fir-cones and bark. Excellent use is made of high-quality resources both indoors and outdoors to provide children with a wide range of learning experiences. For example, Reception children worked outside with props including natural materials and soft toys of the main characters in the story to retell the story *Guess How Much I Love You*. Adults seize opportunities to directly involve themselves in children’s play, and by doing so encourage them to explain their thinking and use a wider range of vocabulary. Children sustain concentration for extended periods of time and play happily together. Expectations are high and adults manage children in a consistent and supportive way so that they can take full advantage of the activities on offer. Focused teaching of early literacy and numeracy skills, together with the support they receive for their personal development, ensures that children grow into confident and independent individuals who are very well prepared for their work in Year 1.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were very positive about the school. Positive comments reflected in particular their confidence in the quality of teaching and pupils’ enjoyment of school. Some concern was indicated about pupils’ behaviour. The inspection team found in their observations of pupils in lessons or around the school, that behaviour was generally excellent. Pupils spoken to reported no significant concerns about behaviour, and they were positive about the recently reviewed procedures for managing behaviour in Years 3 to 6. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed other concerns but these were specific to individuals.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Saint Barnabas 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 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 246 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	66	20	32	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	65	20	32	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	31	50	26	42	3	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	55	22	35	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	55	27	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	31	50	25	40	1	2	2	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	52	25	40	4	6	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)	29	48	25	41	5	8	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	32	52	25	40	3	5	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	40	24	39	6	10	4	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	35	34	55	5	8	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	47	28	45	3	5	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	40	65	20	32	1	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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 8 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.



7 October 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Saint Barnabas Church of England Primary School,
Birmingham, B24 9BY**

Thank you very much for making us feel so welcome during the inspection of your school. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and found you to be extremely polite and helpful. We appreciate the time you took to tell us what you think about your school.

We think your school is outstanding. Here are some of the many things about your school that are excellent. You behave exceedingly well and work very hard, so you make extremely good progress and attain high standards in your work. You are taught exceptionally well and the planning of your work through topics makes learning meaningful and interesting for you. Because of the outstanding care, support and guidance you receive you feel very safe and thoroughly enjoy each other's company at school. Your school is led and managed very well indeed and all the staff and governors are working hard to ensure it continues to help you to achieve your very best. By sharing your ideas through the school council you make a very good contribution to the quality of your school.

Even an outstanding school can get better so we have asked it to make some improvements.

- Your parents and carers are to be helped to get more involved in supporting your learning at home and sharing their ideas and views with the school.
- Plans to make links with schools in other countries are to be acted on, so that you can learn more about the range of backgrounds pupils come from in other parts of the world.

You can help your school by continuing to work hard, sharing your ideas with your teachers and continuing with your excellent attendance.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cogher
Lead inspector

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