

St Julian's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	109210
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	377889
Inspection dates	30 April–1 May 2012
Lead inspector	Colin Lee

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	91
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Louise Bray
Headteacher	Jane Gascoigne
Date of previous school inspection	14 February 2007
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Colin Lee

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspector observed the teaching of five teachers in a total of ten lessons. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. The inspector took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at the school's data on pupils' attainment and progress, the school development plan, other planning documents and procedures for keeping pupils safe. The inspector analysed 45 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as speaking to a group of parents and carers. Questionnaires completed by staff and Key Stage 2 pupils were also analysed.

Information about the school

The school is much smaller than an average-sized primary school. It meets the government's floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Pupils are taught in four mixed-age classes, Reception and Year 1, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and, Years 5 and 6. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is slightly below average. The school has received awards for many aspects of its work, including the International Schools and Artsmark awards and the Inclusion Quality Mark. Since September 2010 the school has worked collaboratively with Camerton Church of England Primary School, creating what is called a soft federation, with one headteacher and joint governing body committees. Consultation is currently taking place about formalising this federation and including a third school.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding school. The high quality of education helps all pupils to thrive both academically and in their personal development.
- For some years pupils' attainment in English by the end of Year 6 has been well above average. Throughout the school pupils achieve exceptionally high levels for their age in their reading, writing and communication skills. In the past this has not been matched by mathematics. Measures to improve this are proving very successful and attainment in mathematics is now above average by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils throughout the school now make rapid progress in developing their mathematics skills and attainment is fast approaching the levels reached in literacy.
- The impact of the high quality of teaching is seen in pupils' outstanding achievement across the curriculum. Teachers make learning exciting; pupils are highly motivated by the stimulating learning activities they are given and they constantly strive to meet their teachers' high expectations. Teachers promote key literacy and numeracy skills very effectively throughout the curriculum. In nearly all lessons pupils are encouraged to think about how well they are learning and how to improve their work, although opportunities to do this are occasionally missed.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes help lessons have a calm, but busy, working atmosphere. Pupils say they feel very safe in school, which reflects parents and carers' views. Pupils also say bullying of any form is non-existent, and rare incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly.
- Leadership and management are outstanding at all levels. Management of performance is given high priority by senior leaders, with rigorous checking of teaching and pupils' progress. The stimulating curriculum promotes a love of learning in all pupils and has an outstanding impact on their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase pupils' short-term progress by ensuring there are frequent opportunities in all lessons for pupils to assess their own learning in order to identify the next steps needed to improve.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The very great majority of pupils make rapid progress in most subjects. All groups make similarly rapid progress, including children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs respond exceptionally well to the support of teachers, teaching assistants and other pupils and make the same rapid progress as their peers. Parents and carers rightly believe that their children are achieving very well.

Pupils' progress is helped by their obvious love of learning, a strong motivation to improve and the ability to take responsibility for their own learning. These qualities were evident, for example, in the topic work of pupils in Years 3 and 4. The pupils worked in small groups on aspects of the Titanic topic that, as a group, they had decided to investigate. A wide variety of tasks, from model making to script writing, were under way. Having downloaded a typical Titanic menu from the internet, a group wrote a script of a waiter taking orders for dinner. It was decided that further research of the more obscure items on the menu was necessary in case, as one pupil explained that 'members of the class ask what these things were when we give a presentation of our work'. Through one activity, these pupils demonstrated the high quality of their skills in reading, writing, communication, historical enquiry, information and communication technology (ICT) and collaborative working.

The high quality of learning is evident from the moment children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Attainment on entry to this stage varies annually because of the small numbers involved. Children in Reception make particularly impressive progress in their language development. This was evident in their independent activities, such as the animated telephone conversation of a child taking an order in the class shop, and in the well structured sentences that children write. It was also seen in an outstanding lesson on linking sounds and letters (phonics) where they enthusiastically played a Bingo game, matching the teacher's sounding of letters to those written on their boards. Children's knowledge far exceeded that typically expected of their age.

The linking of sounds and letters is learned very successfully in all classes and this is a key reason for the above average reading and writing attainment by the end of Key Stage 1. A continuing love of reading is evident in Year 6 pupils, whose impressive, fluent, expressive reading is matched by excellent comprehension and a mature

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ability to discuss themes, characters and meaning in their books. This indicates why reading attainment is well above the national average at the end of Year 6.

There is a similar picture of attainment in writing, where standards of attainment are also well above average by the end of Year 6. The quality is typified by a diary entry written by a Year 6 pupil describing the imaginary day she was evacuated during the Second World War when 'mother cried so much I thought she would flood the station'.

The gap between attainment in English and mathematics is narrowing rapidly due, in part, to the comprehensive professional development programme undertaken by teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils are constantly encouraged to talk about their work, using correct mathematical vocabulary to explain their working methods. Consequently, they acquire a well-developed ability to think logically about how problems can be solved, showing both knowledge and understanding of key mathematical principles. These fundamental skills are speeding up progress and giving all pupils a confidence that was not always present in the past.

Quality of teaching

Senior leaders have focused teachers on ensuring there is a high quality of teaching and learning in every lesson. Teachers achieve this by providing stimulating learning activities that are carefully matched to pupils' abilities and needs and each task builds systematically on what has been learned before. Emphasis on first hand experience through practical activity, use of the school's outdoor environment and frequent visits to places and events that support what is being learned make learning exciting and meaningful for pupils. Pupils thrive on challenge and show determination to produce work that meets their teachers' high expectations. Year 1 pupils, for example, building up a vocabulary of words starting with the same two letters, eagerly looked as requested at what others had written in order to find words they had not thought of. Similar respect for the ideas of others was a key feature in a Year 6 mathematics lesson. Pupils showed the high level of collaboration that the teacher had emphasised when they worked together using algebra to solve a complex problem. Parents and carers rightly believe that their children are well taught.

In most lessons, pupils are regularly asked to review for themselves how well they are doing and how work might be improved. Just occasionally, this does not happen often enough. Assessment over the longer term is sharply focused on measuring progress term by term in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers do this very effectively and use the information well to identify any pupils falling behind. They then monitor carefully the impact of the programmes introduced to help pupils to catch up. The skilful support of the teaching assistants, working with disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, enables the pupils to consistently make similar progress to their peers. Pupils' attainment is assessed thoroughly across the whole curriculum. Teachers use the broad, balanced curriculum very effectively to develop key skills in literacy, mathematics and ICT. Teachers consider carefully the

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impact of learning activities on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by providing, for example, many opportunities for collaborative work and using the school's many international links to develop pupils' understanding of cultural differences.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Outstanding behaviour, both over time and day by day in lessons and at playtimes, is due to the guidance pupils receive on what is acceptable behaviour and the very effective, consistent behaviour management by all adults. Records confirm the quality of behaviour over time, and pupils, parents and carers have similarly positive views that the standard of behaviour is high.

Pupils reflect the view of the vast majority of parents and carers when they not only say that they feel completely safe in school but they also explain what they have learned from the wide-ranging safety education they receive. They show vigilance in tasks, such as using equipment in science lessons or moving apparatus in physical education. Pupils say there is no bullying in school; they are confident that it would be dealt with promptly were it to occur. They show a good understanding of different types of bullying. Some older pupils, for example, explained the meaning of cyber bullying and showed sensitive awareness of the possible effects of behaviour such as repeated name calling. Others emphasised that gender or racial discrimination is non-existent in school. The relationships between pupils are a significant strength. Both the oldest and youngest enjoy opportunities such as when Years 5 and 6 pupils accompany Reception children to the weekly church service. A further example is the good relationships between pupils from the federation schools. Pupils say that the fact that 'everyone gets on with everyone else' is one of the reasons they enjoy school. Above average rates of attendance further confirm this enjoyment.

Leadership and management

The high quality of leadership and management is the cornerstone of the school's success. The headteacher has successfully promoted collaboration between the two schools at all levels, although the benefits of this have not been communicated clearly enough to parents and carers, several of whom have expressed concern about the limited information they have received. The collaboration has produced a highly-effective senior leadership team whose thorough self-evaluation of strengths and weaknesses identifies key priorities for school development planning. Clear targets are set and progress towards meeting these is carefully monitored. Such monitoring ensures that the curriculum is very well matched to pupils' needs. This curriculum and the overall quality of teaching are consistently improved by professional development matched to individual and whole-school needs. The comprehensive professional development of teachers and teaching assistants has impacted very successfully on pupils' achievement in mathematics. Beyond this, other significant improvements since the last inspection include development of the outdoor learning environment, assessment across the whole curriculum and the continuing rising trend in literacy attainment. These achievements show there is an

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outstanding capacity for sustained improvement in the future.

Leadership of teaching is exemplary, with constant monitoring of teachers' lessons and planning, of teaching assistants' effectiveness, and of teaching's impact on pupils' achievement across the curriculum. The school currently has a high proportion of teaching staff on maternity leave, but the high quality of teaching has been maintained, as has pupils' progress, by temporary teachers and other staff who have met the headteacher's high expectations. This was confirmed during the inspection where examples of outstanding teaching included temporary staff. Many learning activities within the curriculum very effectively promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The promotion of equal opportunities and tackling discrimination is central to the school's ethos. The school is vigilant in ensuring that all groups of pupils have a curriculum matched to their needs, that all maintain comparable rates of progress and that there is an absence of discrimination.

The governing body provides very strong support and challenge to school leaders. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements are meticulous and that staff are thoroughly and regularly trained in attending to health and safety, risk assessment and child protection issues. Close cooperation with staff, as well as independent monitoring and evaluation of school improvement, means that the governing body is insightful, very well informed about the school's work and confident in providing challenge to hold the school to account.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



2 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Julian's Church of England Primary School, Wellow, Bath, BA2 8QS

I am writing to thank you for helping me during the inspection of your school. I especially enjoyed talking to you and listening to your views. I have taken these views into account in writing this report. St Julian's Church of England Primary School is an outstanding school. Here are some of the main findings from the report.

- You work hard and make rapid progress in your work.
- You say you enjoy learning and I saw that in many lessons.
- By Year 6, the standards you achieve are well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics.
- You are taught outstandingly well and teachers check your progress carefully, with helpful marking.
- You think carefully about how you can improve your work, but I want teachers to make sure you always have enough time in lessons to do this.
- Your behaviour is excellent and I was very impressed by how well you get on with one another and particularly by how older pupils look out for the younger ones.
- You say you feel very safe in school. This is because all the adults do an excellent job in looking after you.
- All the staff and governors work very well together to help the school to improve.

All of you can help your teachers to make St Julian's Church of England Primary School an even better school by continuing to work hard to improve and enjoying your learning. Thank you once again for your help during my visit, and best wishes for your work in the future.

Yours sincerely

Colin Lee
Lead inspector

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