

St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 131683 |
| Local authority | Lancashire |
| Inspection number | 381387 |
| Inspection dates | 2–3 May 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Diane Auton |

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

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|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 230 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | David Hartley |
| Headteacher | Kieran Heakin |
| Date of previous school inspection | 10 January 2008 |
| School address | Thames Avenue Burnley BB10 2PZ |
| Telephone number | 01282 438120 |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Diane Auton
Melvyn Hemmings

Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited nine teachers in their classrooms and observed 12 lessons. They listened to pupils read and observed the teaching of letters and sounds in Key Stage 1. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school development plan, safeguarding and equality policies and minutes of governing body meetings. Inspectors reviewed information provided by parents and carers in 47 completed questionnaires. They also took into account the views of pupils in Key Stage 2 and those that staff expressed in the questionnaires they returned.

Information about the school

The school is similar in size to most other primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals has risen since the time of the previous inspection and is now above average. The proportion of disabled pupils and pupils with special educational needs, including those supported at school action plus and with a statement of special educational needs, has also risen and is now above average. Most pupils are White British, with a small proportion from other ethnic backgrounds. In 2011, the school did not meet the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

The school moved all key stages on to a single site in September 2010 after an extensive programme of building improvements. Since its previous inspection, the school has renewed its Investors in People status and has also gained the Eco-School Green Flag award and the Basic Skills Quality Mark, both for the second time.

The school provides a breakfast club each morning during term time. An after-school club is provided on site by an independent company; this provision is subject to separate inspection by Ofsted and reports are available on the Ofsted website.

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

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|---------------------------------------|----------|
| Overall Effectiveness | 3 |
| Achievement of pupils | 3 |
| Quality of teaching | 3 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | 3 |
| Leadership and management | 3 |

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not yet good because the quality of teaching is uneven and in a minority of year groups, pupils' progress is not rapid enough. Members of the governing body and all staff do not yet have a clear enough picture of achievement across the school. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory although it is improving as a result of actions taken in the current year. Attainment is now in line with national expectations in Years 2 and Year 6. Children make a successful start to their education in the Reception class .
- Behaviour is satisfactory. This is a happy school and while pupils usually behave well, feel safe and show consideration for others, their attitudes to learning are not as positive in some lessons. This leads to slower learning and reduced progress. Older pupils frequently act as buddies to younger ones, enhancing the school's family ethos. Although pupils clearly want to do well, in the minority of lessons where teaching is weaker, there are not enough opportunities for them to become independent learners.
- Teaching is satisfactory. Improvements to teaching are increasing pupils' progress in some classes. Where teaching is less effective, the pace of learning is slower and pupils are not always aware fully of what they need to do next to improve their work.
- The school development plan sets out appropriate improvement strategies, but success criteria are not defined sharply enough. The leadership of teaching and management of performance are satisfactory. The school has started to use the information it gains from progress reviews each term to identify underachievement and to put in additional support where it is needed. Some parents and carers feel they are not given enough information about their children's learning and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better and that it enables pupils to build continuously on their skills, year by year, as they move up through the school by:
 - providing frequent opportunities for pupils to take part in independent learning activities so that they can learn more about how to organise their own learning
 - improving consistency in the quality of marking, so that pupils are always given clear guidance about the next steps they need to take to improve their work
 - providing a brisk pace of learning in all lessons.

- Improve the impact and effectiveness of leadership and management and strengthen the drive for school improvement by:
 - rigorously monitoring the quality of teaching, keeping a clear focus on its impact on learning outcomes for pupils
 - ensuring that the school development plan includes sharply-defined success criteria against which to measure how well the school is doing
 - providing succinct summaries of the outcomes of progress reviews each term which are shared with staff and governors and ensuring that parents and carers are informed about the review outcomes, in order for them to gain accurate knowledge of their children's achievement.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' overall achievement is currently satisfactory. Pupils apply themselves well in lessons. They listen carefully to instructions and they make an effort to present their work neatly. They collaborate well when working with a partner or in a group. In discussions, they are keen to offer ideas and listen well to each other. In the minority of lessons where teaching is less effective, pupils are more often passive and compliant rather than active learners.

Pupils' level of attainment has risen during the current year; this is particularly evident in pupils' books in those classes where teaching is most effective. Most pupils are now working at age-related levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Attainment in reading is higher than in writing, but the gap between the two areas is narrowing in the current year. Children join the Reception class with attainment below what is typical for their age. They make good progress and achieve well as a result of good teaching and a lively curriculum, so they reach the level expected by the end of Reception year. Progress is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, but pupils in Years 2 and Year 6 have made good progress this year and their attainment is now in line with national standards. In some of the other

year groups, however, progress has been slower, especially in writing. Regular teaching of letters and the sounds they make is having a positive impact on improving pupils' reading skills. Pupils from Key Stage 1 read to an inspector, showing interest and enjoyment and demonstrating that they use their skills to sound out and understand new or difficult words. Reading attainment is now at the expected age-related levels in Year 2 and by the time pupils leave school in Year 6. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, in line with that of their peers.

Parents' and carers' responses indicate that most are happy with their children's achievement. A small but significant minority said they feel they are not given enough information about how well their children are doing, and inspection findings support this view.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers strongly agree that their children are taught well. Inspectors found that the quality of teaching is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in some of the other classes across the school, but satisfactory overall in the school, because the quality of teaching varies and it is satisfactory rather than good in a substantial minority of lessons.

Lessons are usually planned appropriately to meet the range of pupils' learning needs. This was a strong feature in some of the good lessons seen. For example, in a literacy lesson in Year 1, a group of lower-ability pupils successfully achieved their learning objective to write an introduction to a story by first using puppets to act out how the story began. They then went on eagerly, with the support of a teaching assistant, to present their ideas in writing. They achieved well in the lesson because they were well supported and the activity was matched well to their learning needs. In lessons such as this, teaching makes a strong contribution to pupils' positive attitudes to, and enjoyment of learning.

In the less effective lessons, the pace of learning was often too slow, with the teacher's input with the whole class taking too long, so the momentum of learning was reduced and progress was slower. Some lessons were over directed by the teacher, limiting pupils' opportunities to think for themselves. In the best lessons, more is expected of pupils; they respond positively when this is the case and show they can work independently and achieve well. Marking is often used effectively to help pupils improve their work. This is not a consistent picture across the classes, however. Sometimes marking is perfunctory and does not give clear advice to pupils about the next steps they need to take. Teaching assistants contribute appropriately to all pupils' learning, but particularly to that of pupils with additional learning needs.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Parents' and carers' responses to the questionnaire survey showed that they believe their children are safe in school and that behaviour is good. Inspection evidence supports their views about safety, but found that behaviour is satisfactory rather than good. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory overall. Pupils in year groups where teaching is most effective take more responsibility for their learning. Pupils in Year 6, for example, know their learning targets and can talk about what they will need to do to achieve them and what the next steps might be. This is not a consistent picture across the school. Pupils in some of the other year groups do not have such a good awareness of their own achievement and how to improve it.

Older pupils take on responsibilities willingly and make a genuine contribution to the smooth running of the school. For example, volunteer pupils from Year 6 arrive early each morning to help put out resources in the outdoor area for the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident that help is always on hand if they have a problem. They are able to explain their understanding of different types of bullying and they say that any falling out which may occur is dealt with effectively by staff, if they are not able to deal with it themselves.

The school provides sensitive support for pupils and families whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. The 'Beehive' nurture group is a valued resource and helps to break down barriers to learning that some pupils sometimes encounter. The well-attended breakfast club helps to get the day off to a good start.

Attendance, which was below average for the past three years, has improved considerably in the current school year and is now average.

Leadership and management

The headteacher and the assistant headteacher have identified the school's main weaknesses accurately and are tackling them, with support from the local authority. A programme of professional development has contributed well to the improvements that have been achieved in the current year. These include the development and effective use of systems to track, measure and review pupils' progress. Regular management of performance and monitoring by the headteacher and the assistant headteacher has ensured that teaching is now at least satisfactory across the school. Leaders understand that monitoring needs to be more rigorous and ensure that all teaching is consistently good or better, if pupils are to build continuously on their learning and skills year on year as they move through the school. The staff team works together well and shares leaders' vision for taking the school forward. The school development plan is currently being revised to ensure that it provides a plan for improvement against which to measure success throughout the year. Members of the governing body play an active role and are building their capacity to hold the school to account. Information about pupils' achievement is shared with them, but the outcomes of progress reviews are not presented clearly and concisely enough to enable governors to assess readily how well pupils are doing in every year group each term. Overall, the school's capacity for continued improvement is satisfactory.

The governing body ensures that safeguarding is given appropriate priority and the school complies with statutory requirements for safeguarding. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily; the school's ethos is inclusive and discrimination is not tolerated.

The school's curriculum is satisfactory. It is appropriately broad and balanced and pupils say, 'there are lots of interesting things to do'. Teachers are beginning to make links between subjects, which is helping to improve pupils' basic skills, for example, by providing more regular opportunities for pupils to write outside of literacy lessons. The curriculum is enriched by opportunities for pupils to learn skills in sports and the arts and to learn a modern foreign language. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted satisfactorily. Older pupils, for example, are able to talk knowledgeably about what they have learnt about world faiths and cultures, through visits to a range of places of worship.

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 up 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.



4 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St John the Baptist Roman Catholic Primary School, Burnley, BB10 2PZ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspectors when we visited your school. It was a great pleasure to meet you all and we enjoyed our conversations with you.

We found that St John's is a satisfactory school. It is also a happy school and we were pleased to hear from you about how much you enjoy all the activities that are provided for you. Your education gets off to a good start in the Reception class. You are polite young people. Your attendance has improved considerably this year – well done, keep up the good work and see if you can make it even better! The adults in school look after you well. They are working hard to make sure that teaching continues to improve and, because of this, your learning and progress are starting to speed up.

The school's leaders agree with us that further improvements are needed, so that you can all achieve as well as possible. These are some of the things we have asked them to do next, because we think they will help your school to carry on improving:

- make sure that teaching is always good or better
- make sure that, when teachers mark your work, they always give you clear advice on what to do next, so you can carry on improving
- improve the plan they make for the school each year by putting more details in it about how they are going to measure how well the school is doing
- improve the ways they share information about your learning and progress with all the staff, with the governors and with your parents and carers.

You can help with all of this by continuing to be happy, hard-working learners. Thank you again for an enjoyable two days and best wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Diane Auton
Lead Inspector

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