

Whitwick St John The Baptist Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120171
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	379970
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2012
Lead inspector	Kenneth Thomas

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	385
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Simon Watson
Headteacher	Christine Killip
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2007
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Age group	3–11
Inspection date(s)	10–11 May 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas

Additional Inspector

Alan Jones

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Heather Phillips

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 10 teachers and visited 25 lessons. These included joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made other, briefer visits to lessons and also heard pupils reading. The inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and groups of pupils. They took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including procedures for keeping pupils safe and the minutes of the governing body. The inspectors analysed 117 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, as well as those completed by staff and pupils.

Information about the school

Whitwick St John The Baptist Church of England Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

The school holds a number of awards including National Healthy School Status, Activemark, Artsmark and the Basic Skills Quality Mark. The school met the 2011 government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The headteacher was appointed in September 2010.

The school accommodates the 'Kool Kids' before- and after-school club that is not managed by the governing body. This is inspected separately.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The headteacher provides a clear sense of direction and the school is on an upward path. It is not yet good because achievement, teaching and learning are only satisfactory. 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 and attainment is broadly average. Progress is good in the Early Years Foundation Stage but inconsistent in later years. Pupils enjoy reading but strategies for teaching letters and sounds are not applied consistently. Planned opportunities for pupils to write at length and across the curriculum are limited.
- Teaching is satisfactory. While there are examples of good and better teaching that promotes good progress, this is not consistent across all years. In some lessons, expectations are not high enough and learning tasks are not challenging enough. Introductions and teachers' explanations are at times too long so pupils do not have enough time for independent learning.
- Behaviour is good and pupils feel safe in school. They are polite and cooperate well with their classmates and staff. Excellent relationships underpin good behaviour management. As a result, the school provides a calm and harmonious learning environment. If they have any concerns, pupils are confident they are dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- The leadership of teaching and management of performance are satisfactory. The headteacher has introduced a range of initiatives, based on accurate self-evaluation, which have improved teaching and pupils' progress. Several middle leaders are new to their roles and have yet to develop their monitoring and evaluation skills so that good teaching and learning practice can be identified and shared more widely. Similarly, many members of the governing body have been recently appointed and, although very supportive, they lack the skills

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needed to fulfil their roles as critical friends.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate progress by:
 - developing early reading skills by ensuring that strategies for teaching letters and sounds are applied consistently
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use and extend their writing skills in all subjects.
- Develop the quality of teaching so that it consistently promotes good achievement by:
 - raising expectations and making full use of assessment information to ensure that learning tasks are appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils
 - ensuring teachers' explanations are not too long, so that full advantage is taken of pupils' capacity for independent learning.
- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - middle leaders have the skills necessary to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning and guide improvement in their areas of responsibility
 - governors have the skills needed to offer challenge and support in equal measure.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Parents and carers believe that their children achieve well. Inspectors found that pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall and it is good for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which are, overall, below those typical for their age. Their communication and language skills are particularly weak. They quickly feel secure and confident in the welcoming learning environment and make good progress in building their skills and knowledge. As a result, attainment is in line with expectations by the time they enter Year 1.

Good behaviour and attitudes were observed in all lessons. Pupils tackle tasks willingly, are helpful to classmates and staff, and try to present their work carefully. They learn well when they are involved, challenged and excited by learning. For example, in a mathematics lesson with Years 5 and 6 pupils, rapid progress was made because they thoroughly enjoyed a brisk pace. Pupils rose to the challenge to complete more difficult mathematical problems because they were applying their mathematical skills in a real-life context. Good progress was made because they were expected to work hard, achieve clear goals and expectations were high. However, inspection evidence confirmed the school's evaluation that progress is not

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consistently good in all lessons and, as a result, is satisfactory overall. This is because children's good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not fully built on in Key Stages 1 and 2 so progress slows to satisfactory.

Progress in reading slows because of inconsistencies in the teaching of letters and sounds in Key Stage 1. As a result, reading skills are average by the end of Year 2 and remain so when pupils leave school in Year 6. Attainment in writing, particularly in spelling, punctuation and grammar, sentence construction and the use of vocabulary, lags behind attainment in reading and mathematics. This is because, in the past, it had not been identified clearly enough as a priority. Assessments of pupils' attainment were not reliable enough to target improvement accurately and improve teaching and learning. An increased emphasis on the development of writing skills, together with more rigorous assessment systems have now been put in place and are welcomed by staff. Classroom observations, the work seen in pupils' books and school assessment information confirm that all groups of pupils make comparable progress. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers because their particular needs are identified quickly and appropriate support is provided by the class teacher and teaching assistants.

Quality of teaching

Overall, teaching is satisfactory. It includes a sizeable proportion of good teaching, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and upper Key Stage 2. Children in the pre-school and Reception classes are provided with a wide range of stimulating activities both indoors and out to encourage them to explore and learn. They are just as likely, for example, to be writing and counting outdoors as well as indoors. This is because carefully prepared activities are available to encourage and develop children's literacy and numeracy skills.

Parents and carers feel their children are taught well but the inspection confirmed the school's evaluation that teaching is satisfactory. Lesson observations and school monitoring records show the proportion of good teaching is increasing. Lessons promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, resulting in the friendly, respectful relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils behave well and say they enjoy their lessons. Where teaching is most effective lessons are carefully planned, the work set is closely matched to pupils' abilities, learning activities are well directed, and teachers use questions to check pupils' understanding and to consolidate their learning. This was exemplified in a lively Year 2 English lesson, where pupils increased their understanding of the use of adjectives in descriptive writing. However, expectations of what pupils can achieve are not consistently high. Teachers sometimes talk for too long and do not always make the best use assessment information to challenge pupils of all abilities.

In Key Stage 1, progress slows to satisfactory because information from the Early Years Foundation Stage is not used sufficiently well to ensure learning builds on children's previous knowledge. Pupils know their learning targets and, through the marking of their work, receive helpful feedback on how to improve. Teachers'

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planning ensures that teaching assistants are deployed appropriately to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. The support is sensitive and considered.

Pupils' personal and academic development is supported by a new, thematic based curriculum that builds on pupils' interests and places an increasing emphasis on the development of literacy skills. This is reflected in the impressive amount of pupils' work in English and other subjects that is on display around the school, which celebrates independent writing and increases pupils' confidence. By the time pupils leave school, most are mature individuals who are adequately prepared for the next stage of their education.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour and safety are good. Almost all of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were confident that their children are safe and well looked after, and that behaviour is consistently good. School records corroborate their view, showing that good behaviour is the norm. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle quickly into school, and rapidly learn what is expected of them. This establishes the foundation for the good behaviour observed in the rest of the school. Pupils behave well in lessons and conduct themselves in a thoughtful manner when moving around the school and playing outside. School records, pupils' questionnaire responses and those pupils spoken to during the inspection show that disputes of any kind are very rare. Pupils say that behaviour is good and that they are safe in school. They have a good understanding of what constitutes different types of bullying, and are confident that if there was any it would be dealt with well by adults. Excellent relationships are apparent throughout, with staff acting as very positive role models. This has a clear impact on pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Pupils' attendance has risen to above average because of the action taken to emphasise the importance of regular attendance. They seek out opportunities to take on posts of responsibility, such as being members of the school council or acting as playground buddies, and are willing to work hard on behalf of other pupils. They are particularly proud of the actions they have initiated to raise money for charities and improve aspects of school life, including improvements to the playground and the development of the school environment.

Leadership and management

The headteacher has a detailed understanding of the effectiveness of the school, a clear vision of how it can be improved and has introduced a range of initiatives to bring this about. For example, assessment information is now used more effectively by leaders and teachers to track pupils' progress and identify where additional support may be needed. Improvement in teaching and pupils' achievement is evident because of the impact of well-targeted professional development and effective performance management. Staff morale is high, and the strong sense of shared

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vision was clearly illustrated in the highly positive staff response to the inspection questionnaire. Several middle leaders are new to their roles and while some leadership at this level is very effective, such as that of the Early Years Foundation Stage, many recognise that they do not have the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to be fully effective. Members of the governing body are very supportive of the school and ensure that all safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. However, many governors are new to the role and have yet to develop the skills necessary to gather the first-hand information needed to evaluate the school's strengths and areas where improvement is needed.

The school values all pupils equally and is committed to preventing discrimination. This is supported by a new curriculum that provides pupils with a wide range of motivating learning experiences. This is recognised by parents and carers. One, capturing the views of many said, 'We feel the school provides excellent opportunities for children to learn and develop. Teaching staff have a positive and enthusiastic attitude, giving the children valuable learning experiences.' Staff recognise the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills. Residential and other educational visits add greatly to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Assemblies also make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. The school's links with a broad range of partners have a positive impact on outcomes for pupils and help remove barriers to learning, particularly for those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Staff ensure that all parents and carers are well informed about their children's learning, well-being and development. As a result, parents and carers feel valued and respected as partners in developing their children's learning and improving the life of the school. Overall, the school is demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

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.

14 May 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Whitwick St John The Baptist Church of England Primary School, Coalville, LE67 5AT

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. Your views were very helpful and we enjoyed our discussions with those of you we spoke to in lessons, in meetings and around the school. Thank you, too, to those of you who completed the questionnaire. The school provides you with a satisfactory quality of education. Your make satisfactory progress and attainment is average at the end of Year 6.

You told us how much you enjoy school. We saw how you listen carefully to what your teachers have to say and are willing to work really hard in your lessons. Your good behaviour is a considerable help to your teachers because it enables them to concentrate on making your work interesting and helping you to learn. In order to raise achievement even further we have asked the school to build on the good progress you make in the Nursery and Reception classes. Adults are going to improve the way you are taught letters and sounds, always challenge you to do better and give you lots of opportunities to practise your writing in all subjects. We have also asked the teachers to make sure that you do not spend too long listening to explanations. The teachers spend a lot of time marking your work and when they do this, they give you clear guidance on what you have to do to improve it. You can all help yourselves to make more progress by trying hard to follow the advice you are given.

Adults at school look after you well, so that you are safe and happy. Your headteacher, all the other staff and the governing body are determined to make things even better. To help this we have asked subject coordinators to look more closely at the progress you are making in your lessons. We have also asked that governors are more closely involved in checking the work of the school. We think that everyone can work together to do these things and that you will all want to play your part by behaving well and working really hard in all of your lessons.

Thank you again for your help and all good wishes for your future success.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth Thomas
Lead inspector

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