

Bolsover Church of England Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112801
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378563
Inspection dates	29–30 May 2012
Lead inspector	Paul Weston HMI

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	261
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Milnes
Headteacher	Rowena Herbert
Date of previous school inspection	3 June 2009
School address	Horsehead Lane Bolsover Chesterfield S44 6XH
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Paul Weston

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Amos

Additional Inspector

Clare Adamson

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 22 lessons led by 10 teachers and a higher level teaching assistant. Two were joint observations with the headteacher. Inspectors observed pupils at play, during lunchtime and heard pupils read. Meetings were held with staff, different groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and senior leaders and managers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including arrangements for safeguarding, information about pupils' attainment and progress and pupils' work. They considered the responses to the questionnaire from staff, pupils and 58 parents and carers.

Information about the school

Bolsover Church of England Junior is an average sized school. Numbers on roll are increasing. Almost all pupils are White British and no pupil is in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above that found nationally. The percentage of pupils identified as disabled or with special educational needs is above average and includes pupils with emotional and social, moderate learning and behaviour, and speech, language and communication difficulties. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average. The school meets the government's current floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for progress and attainment.

Pupils are able to attend a privately managed before- and after-school club. This is subject to separate inspection arrangements. The school has achieved numerous awards in recent years, including Healthy Schools status, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Artsmark and Activemark.

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

Key findings

- This is a good school. Pupils benefit from rich curriculum experiences and good teaching so they make good progress throughout the school. The school is not yet outstanding because senior leaders have yet to ensure that more teaching is outstanding in order to accelerate pupils' progress even further. In addition, school improvement plans are too broad and do not focus sharply enough on the main areas for improvement.
- Pupils' achievement is good. From generally above average starting points in Year 3, pupils attain well and attain above average levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels for their age is above the national picture. Some younger pupils struggle to sound out new words. While pupils' mathematical thinking skills have improved, they have insufficient opportunities to apply them in other subjects. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because they get effective, targeted intervention.
- The quality of teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Good relationships between staff and pupils promote a purposeful climate for learning. Effective teaching strategies enable pupils to flourish and make good gains in their learning across the curriculum.
- Pupils behave well, collaborate in shared activities and help each other. They are polite and courteous to visitors and bring enthusiasm and enjoyment to their learning. Pupils and most of their parents and carers feel that the school is a safe place to learn.
- The headteacher and her team communicate high aspirations for pupils' achievement. Teaching and performance management are led and managed well. The strong emphasis on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education. One parent summarised the views of many saying, 'This is a fantastic school.'

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of attainment further and continue to accelerate progress throughout the school by:
 - improving the quality of teaching so that 90% is consistently good and 40% is outstanding by May 2013
 - ensuring teachers' explanations are suitably clear and learning proceeds at a pace that is appropriate for all pupils
 - establishing effective strategies to develop pupils' understanding of the links between sounds and letters (phonics) and using them to develop their reading and writing skills
 - building on the work undertaken in mathematics to increase pupils' confidence to practise, apply and improve their mathematical skills, particularly calculation, in other areas of learning
 - ensuring consistently high expectations of spelling, punctuation and presentation in written work.
- Ensure that the school improvement plan:
 - focuses sharply on the school's agreed priorities for development
 - identifies precisely how and when actions will be monitored and by whom
 - identifies when and how subsequent evaluations will be shared and with whom
 - specifies the role of the governing body in the process
 - measures and summarises the impact of the actions on outcomes for pupils' learning and progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and are keen to succeed. Their good attitudes mean that they work with enthusiasm and determination even when they encounter challenges. For example, in a Year 3 art lesson on creating foliage for a dream tree, pupils were required to thread different types of fabric into hessian. Some pupils found the activity challenging because it required great dexterity. However, all were absorbed in, and persevered with the task. They worked at a good pace with a high degree of concentration to create a range of different leaves made of recycled textiles. Activities such as this ensure learning is at least good and develop pupils' independence, resilience and social skills so they are well equipped to become self-reliant learners.

Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment has risen. It is now above average in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 with a greater proportion

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achieving the higher levels for their age. In 2011, attainment was lower in mathematics compared to that in reading and writing. The school has successfully implemented a range of strategies to develop pupils' mental and problem solving skills. The impact has been highly effective. Attainment in the subject has risen sharply and pupils' confidence is now at a high level. Although mathematical thinking and skills are sometimes developed in some subjects, such as science and geography, opportunities are not always routinely taken in others.

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agree that their children make good progress. Also, almost all pupils say that they learn a lot in lessons. Evidence from lesson observations and pupils' work confirm most pupils make better than expected progress from their starting points. Pupils known to be eligible for free school meals make similar progress to their peers so they attain better than pupils nationally. Effective support is provided for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs which enables them to make good progress towards their targets. Some younger pupils have experienced some disruption to their learning because of staff illness. As a consequence, their progress has not been as rapid as that of most pupils in the school. A few parents and carers expressed their concern about this in their questionnaire returns and when inspectors spoke to them on the playground. School leaders have implemented effective strategies to remedy the situation.

Pupils have good speaking and listening skills and are able to hold articulate, interesting conversations with adults and their peers. Most pupils make good gains in their reading development so their attainment levels are above average by the time they leave the school. However, there are gaps in some of the younger pupils' ability to sound out unfamiliar words which prevent them from reading new texts and spelling unknown words with confidence. A support programme has recently been implemented in partnership with the feeder infant school, but it is too soon to judge its impact.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire and the very large majority of pupils agree that teaching is good. Teaching is strong because whole-school strategies are consistently applied and most teachers deliver purposeful and imaginative activities. This means that learning is memorable and relevant and pupils are excited by their learning. Strong subject knowledge means teachers' planning enables pupils to acquire new skills and knowledge quickly. Resources, particularly in information and communication technology, are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning. For instance, the Olympic topic was brought to life for pupils in Year 3 through the use of animation. All teachers enable pupils to deepen their knowledge by providing meaningful opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas and practise their skills in a range of subject areas. Teaching is at its best when assessment information is used with precision. This means activities are finely tuned to the needs of all pupils leading to good levels of challenge and rapid gains in learning. Occasionally, teachers move lessons on too quickly or do not provide explanations of

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sufficient clarity. In these lessons, pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress.

On the whole, teachers mark work regularly and carefully. A range of other assessment for learning strategies are also successfully employed to help pupils know how well they have done, such as marking their own and others' work against clear criteria. Pupils have a good understanding of the levels they are working at and what they need to do next to improve. Teaching assistants are deployed well to ensure disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are supported effectively in class. They work closely with teachers and regularly discuss exactly what individual pupils need to learn. Many teaching assistants are skilled at providing appropriate support so pupils are able to access the curriculum fully. As a result, these pupils are making good progress.

Good teaching in all areas is underpinned by an effective curriculum. Whole-school planning ensures skills and knowledge are carefully built on as pupils move through the school. A systematic approach to reading means that the subject is generally taught well across the school. Teachers ensure that pupils read regularly to promote accuracy, fluency and understanding. The teaching of writing has been strong over a number of years. However, scrutiny of pupils' books shows that the presentation, punctuation and spelling of some pupils is not always precise enough. Respectful relationships and a broad curriculum underpin pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Most pupils and the majority of parents and carers report that behaviour and safety are good. The inspection evidence indicates that they are right. Behaviour in classes and around school is typically good. The school has robust systems to ensure pupils stay safe. There are some pupils who struggle to behave well. Inspection evidence shows that such challenging behaviour is managed well and improves over time. Those whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable are supported exceptionally well and, as a result, their behaviour and attitude to learning improves. A minority of parents and carers expressed concern about the challenging behaviour exhibited by a small minority of pupils and the disruption this causes to learning. Discussion with pupils and a scrutiny of the school's records show that incidents are rare of bullying related to special educational needs, disability, religion and belief. Pupils feel that, when concerns arise, they are managed effectively and promptly. They say, 'If we have a problem the adults sort it out.'

There is clarity of purpose shared by all staff that leads to the school's positive and deserved reputation for inclusion, promoting good personal development and effective pastoral care. There is a tangible respect between pupils and adults in school. As a result, most pupils work hard in lessons and try to please. That is enhanced by the fact that they enjoy their learning and adults work hard to provide a range of interesting activities within the curriculum. Attendance is high. Exclusions are rare. Pupils are punctual, move between different lessons quickly and relish the

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responsibilities that they are given.

Leadership and management

The governing body, headteacher and senior leaders are ambitious for the school and share a vision for its continuing improvement. Since the previous inspection, pupils' progress has accelerated, particularly in mathematics, the quality of teaching has improved and rates of attendance have increased. These successes demonstrate that the school has a strong capacity for improvement. Pupils' progress is regularly tracked and results are carefully analysed to check that no one is falling behind. School improvement plans are robust but do not clearly convey the school's high ambition for improvement. For example, although a number of actions are identified it is not always clear how these will be monitored, when and by whom. Also the role of the governing body is not explicitly identified. Consequently, this does not enable senior leaders and members of the governing body to track and report progress with sufficient precision. The development needs of teachers are identified accurately and addressed with training and support. All staff, including the headteacher, have performance management targets that promote school improvement.

The good curriculum provides a wide range of rich and memorable experiences and opportunities for pupils to learn about different topics in depth. Learning links are made between different subjects. The school offers a very wide range of extra-curricular clubs, teams and activities, such as gardening, boxing, cooking and looking after a range of animals. These are well liked by pupils and take-up rates are high. Caring for the animals is highly regarded by pupils and parents alike. As one parent said, 'The children love the animals and have learnt about responsibility.' Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well through off-site visits, assemblies and visitors to school.

The latest requirements for safeguarding are fully met which ensures that all pupils and staff are kept safe. The school is successful in ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils, particularly for those with specific needs, and in preventing discrimination. The headteacher provides dedicated and passionate leadership which is moving the whole school community forward. Parents and carers are positive about the leadership and management of the school and say such things as, 'I am proud of the fact my daughter attends Bolsover CofE Junior School.'

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.



31 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Bolsover Church of England Junior School, Chesterfield, S44 6XH

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking to you about your school and visiting your lessons. We particularly enjoyed seeing all the animals, especially the pigs, chickens, guinea pigs and rabbits. Thank you to all of you who completed our questionnaire. You told us that you are happy at school, you feel safe, that bullying is very rare in your school and that adults in the school sort out any problems really quickly. We could see that you all get on really well together, your behaviour is good and you look after each other. You like your teachers and say they treat you 'fair and square.' We were particularly impressed by how much your attendance has improved since the school was last inspected.

We found that Bolsover Church of England Junior is a good school. We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do a number of things to improve your school and make it even better. We have asked your teachers to make sure that you all make at least good progress in your lessons by helping some of the younger pupils understand the links between letters and sounds better. We want you to always try your best with your handwriting, spelling and presentation. You are solving some really hard problems in your mathematics lessons. We want teachers to help you use these skills more in other lessons. Finally, we have asked that school's improvement plans are written in a way that is helpful to all the staff and the governing body, so that they can check how well the school is doing each term.

You can help to improve your school by keeping up your excellent rates of attendance and continuing to work hard.

Thank you for being so kind and courteous during our visit. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul Weston
Her Majesty's Inspector

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