

Bethany Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

Knole Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth, BH1 4DJ

Inspection dates 23–24 October 2012

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in both their personal and academic development during their time at the school.
- Teaching is good or better in nearly all classes and the well planned curriculum meets the needs of all pupils effectively.
- Pupils who have disabilities or special educational needs, as well as those pupils who enter the school speaking little or no English, make similar progress to all other pupils because they receive a good level of targeted support with their learning.
- Careful checking of the quality of teaching has helped staff to improve the way in which they teach.
- Pupils like coming to school and say that they feel safe and enjoy their learning. They show a great deal of respect for others and work hard in lessons.
- Governors are proud of the school and are not afraid to ask the staff challenging questions about the quality of education the school provides for pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are occasions when teachers need to be clearer in establishing what it is that pupils will be learning in lessons and how pupils will know if they have been successful.
- The quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils in lessons varies too much throughout the school and does not always help pupils to understand what they have to do to improve their work.
- Changes to the school's policies for the management of pupils' behaviour are not always communicated clearly to parents and pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with half a day’s notice.
- Inspectors worked in partnership with the school’s senior leadership team when analysing information about the school. This included the school’s self-evaluation documentation, development planning and also data related to pupils’ progress and attainment. Inspectors also analysed the progress made by different groups of pupils in the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school’s policies and procedures, particularly those relating to the pupils’ safety. They also analysed a selection of pupils’ work, especially in mathematics and English.
- Teaching was observed in 17 lessons for a total of 430 minutes. Several of these were joint observations with either the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also observed two assemblies and listened to a number of pupils from Year 3 and Year 6 reading.
- Discussions were held with members of the senior leadership team, governors, the school business manager, pupils and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 16 responses to the on-line questionnaire for parents (Parent View) in planning and carrying out the inspection. They also held informal discussions with 30 parents.

Inspection team

Sarah Varnom, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Michael Barron

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Bethany Junior School is a larger than the average junior school, with a higher than average proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding for children in local authority care or known to be entitled to free school meals). The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with disabilities and special educational needs. These needs include behaviour and learning difficulties.
- The school is part of a federation with St Clement's and St John's Infant School. Both schools share the same headteacher and governing body.
- The proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, many with a first language other than English, is also higher than average. Several of this group are at the early stages of learning to speak English. More than 30 different languages are spoken in school.
- Pupils often attend the school for short periods of time and move into and out of the area with no notice. Just over 60% of pupils in the present Year 6 attended the school in Year 3.
- The school runs a breakfast club which is managed by the governing body and therefore formed part of this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by:
 - ensuring pupils always understand what it is they are going to be learning and know how they will have achieved this
 - making sure teaching assistants are always fully involved in helping pupils to learn in lessons
 - making sure teachers' marking of pupils' work and their spoken feedback always help pupils to know what they have to do to improve their work.
- Make sure that any changes to the school's behaviour policy are always explained in detail to pupils and parents.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Taking account of their different starting points, the proportion of pupils making and exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics compares favourably with the national average.
- Pupils presently in Year 6, who have attended the school since Year 3, are making good progress. Their standards of attainment are above average and this was clear from pupils' work and from the school's systems to track the progress of individual pupils in English and mathematics.
- The well above average number of pupils who did not first enter the school in Year 3 have also made good progress, several from below average starting points.
- Pupils with disabilities and special educational needs are well catered for by the school and make good progress. The progress of minority ethnic pupils, especially those with a first language other than English, is also good and reflects the effective level of care and support they receive from the school.
- The funding the school receives for those pupils eligible for the pupil premium is used well to offer these pupils extra support with their learning. This has helped to narrow the gap in achievement between this group and those pupils not receiving this benefit.
- Reading is given a high priority in school. The teaching of reading is well supported by the regular teaching of letters and sounds and intervention programmes are used effectively to support less able readers.
- Improvements in the teaching of mathematics since the last inspection have seen progress and standards improve in this subject, including in Year 3 and Year 4.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations of the progress pupils are capable of making.
- Teaching in all subjects, including in mathematics and English, is usually good with examples of outstanding practice. A majority of the teaching observed during the inspection was of a good standard, some was outstanding.
- The school has developed effective systems to check the quality of teaching and uses the information well to ensure that teachers are provided with the training they require in order to improve their practice. As a result, teaching has improved since the last inspection.
- Teachers try to make learning interesting for pupils by mixing subjects together. For example, in a lesson based around a project on Ancient Egypt, pupils enthusiastically made papyrus parchment and also death masks. They enjoyed making models with levers, designing jewellery, taking photographs and took a great deal of pride in giving their visiting parents a very full explanation about all the different things they were learning. Parents were very pleased with what they saw, especially the work that their children had completed at home.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to talk and listen to one another in lessons and this helps them to learn to value each other's ideas and opinions.
- The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work in books varies. Some is of a good quality, but there are occasions when marking and spoken information do not give pupils enough details about what they need to do to improve their work. This can affect their progress.
- The teaching of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and also pupils whose first language is not English, is well planned and organised. The teacher with responsibility for these pupils is passionate about ensuring that all this group of pupils does well. A mixture of whole class, small group and individual sessions are used effectively to help these pupils make good progress.
- Teaching is at its best when the pace of learning in lessons is brisk and short introductions are used effectively to recap pupils' previous knowledge and make sure pupils know what it

is they are expected to learn. However, in a minority of observed lessons, there were occasions when lesson introductions were too long and confusing and pupils and teaching assistants were not involved in learning activities for quite long parts of lessons. As a result, pupils sometimes did not have the time to finish their work successfully and make the progress they were capable of.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils enjoy learning and have good attitudes to school. They are very polite and friendly.
- Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school. Their parents agree and value the very good level of care and support the school provides for their children.
- Pupils have developed a very good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including physical, emotional and cyber bullying. However, they are adamant that little bullying takes place in the school. They are also confident that adults always deal with any rare instances quickly and firmly.
- Pupils enjoy playtimes and lunchtimes. They behave well even though the dining room and the playground are very cramped.
- Behaviour in lessons is good, although a very small minority of pupils very occasionally misbehave. Several also stated, as did some parents, that they were sometimes unaware of changes to the school's behaviour policies.
- Pupils' attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now in line with national averages. The school works hard with families to make sure pupils attend school on time and regularly. Pupils arriving late have to come through the main school entrance and sign in. Persistent lateness and pupil absences without reason are quickly followed up with an immediate phone call to the homes of the pupils involved.
- There have been no recent incidents of pupils being permanently excluded from the school even though a very small minority of pupils have quite complex behaviour needs. The school has developed a well-resourced and very attractive colourful 'chill out' room for pupils who sometimes find behaving well and socialising with others quite difficult.
- Sessions provided by the school for the families of pupils, which focus on the social and emotional aspects of learning, are very effective in supporting parents to work with their children in order to help them behave well.

The leadership and management are good

- The school's leaders have a clear vision for continuous school improvement and have a firm understanding of the strengths of the school and those aspects which are in need of development.
- Senior leaders are accurate in the judgements they make about the quality of teaching. They know how to help staff move forward and become even better teachers. Effective performance management ensures that there is a good match between how well teachers perform and how well they are paid.
- The headteacher is very clear about the needs of the pupils in his school. He carefully directs additional funding to support pupils' learning. He and his deputy monitor the impact of this spending regularly to ensure money is well spent.
- Parents and carers are involved well in their children's education and are kept informed via frequent meetings, newsletters and text messages.
- The curriculum excites and motivates pupils while providing them with a secure framework to improve their reading, writing and mathematics skills. The school promotes positive behaviour through a broad range of experiences that contribute well to pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development. For example, pupils engage enthusiastically in the school choir and in African drumming, performing as members of the Bournemouth School's Music

Association.

- The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities for pupils. These include sporting, cultural and artistic activities and are popular with pupils. Over 70% of pupils regularly attended at least one of these activities during the last school year.
- The headteacher ensures that every pupil has an equal chance to achieve their best. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body fulfils all its statutory duties effectively and ensures that arrangements for safeguarding pupils are implemented thoroughly in order to keep pupils safe. Members of the governing body are not afraid to ask challenging questions of the headteacher and senior staff regarding the school's performance. The chair of governors and the chair of the curriculum and standards committee are in school regularly and understand the make up of the school. They are able to ensure all governors are perceptive in their discussions about the value of spending decisions and the impact these have on pupil progress. The governing body has made good decisions about the spending of pupil premium funding. For example, investment in a new reading programme has helped this group of pupils make similar progress to all other pupils in developing their reading skills. Additionally, a parents' forum has been established by the governing body to enable parents to meet regularly and be involved in discussions about the work of the school. This is helping the parents to work together and is chaired by parents and supported by governors.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 113844 |
| Local authority | Bournemouth |
| Inspection number | 401394 |

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

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| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Voluntary aided |
| Age range of pupils | 7–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 328 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mrs Elizabeth Spreadbury |
| Headteacher | Mr Stephen Orman |
| Date of previous school inspection | 22–23 September 2009 |
| Telephone number | 01202 393570 |
| Fax number | 01202 391947 |
| Email address | bethanyce@bournemouth.gov.uk |

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