

St. Barnabas' Church of England Aided Primary School

Hart Street, Oxford, OX2 6BN

Inspection dates 20–21 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Most pupils, including those of high ability, achieve well in English and mathematics because teachers consistently make sure pupils understand how to improve their work.
- Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in writing.
- Pupils behave and concentrate well when working by themselves. This allows teachers to spend time giving more intensive support to individuals or groups when necessary.
- Pupils take pride in learning. They enjoy opportunities to share what they are doing with each other and with their families.
- Pupils feel very safe in school. Pupils from diverse backgrounds mix well together, which contributes to the good working atmosphere in lessons.
- Since the last inspection, leaders at all levels have worked well together to develop the teaching of English and mathematics. This has improved pupils' achievement.
- Governors make a strong contribution to the school's success and continuing development. They are well informed and ambitious for further improvement.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Gaps remain between the attainment of those eligible for support through the pupil premium and other pupils in the school, particularly in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not achieve as well in mathematics as in English.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 16 lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books to gather evidence of their progress and teachers' marking. This scrutiny was carried out with the headteacher and also in lessons.
- A meeting was held to discuss the management of support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, and the Chair and other members of the Governing Body. A telephone discussion was held with the local authority.
- The views of parents and carers were gathered through the online Parent View questionnaire. Responses to a recent survey of parents' views, conducted by the governing body, were also considered, as were the views of some parents spoken to when they attended an assembly.
- The inspectors considered 24 questionnaires completed by staff.
- School documentation, including policies, self-evaluation and improvement plans, were reviewed.

Inspection team

Anthony Byrne, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lesley Voaden

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The school has an above average proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which is extra money given to schools by the government to support pupils known to be eligible to receive free school meals, those in local authority care and those with a parent in the armed services.
- At around half, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well above average, as is the proportion for whom English is an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A breakfast club is run by the school. An after-school club is offered on the premises by a private provider.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in mathematics for disabled pupils, those with special educational needs, and those eligible for support through the pupil premium by:
 - developing and closely checking the quality of support for these pupils, both in lessons and in one-to-one tuition.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children's skills when they join the Early Years Foundation Stage vary considerably. Learning through creative play with good resources and adult-led sessions enables good progress. Adults guide children's learning but allow them to find out things for themselves.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage develop literacy skills well through the 'big talk'. This involves them taking home a topic to discuss with the family, which they follow up the next day by sounding out and attempting to write words that have cropped up. This gives the words a real-life context and, in the children's eyes, gives reading and writing purpose and importance.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is broadly average. In recent years there has been an increase in the number of pupils attaining at the higher levels in English. This is partly due to the 'big writing' initiative, because the approach helps pupils understand how to construct sentences and develop a wider vocabulary.
- Pupils use their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) to help them read unfamiliar words. Those pupils who read to the inspectors used their skills in phonics very well.
- The school has recently started to introduce strategies to speed up pupils' progress in mathematics. Planning of mathematics lessons is very clear and tasks are adjusted to suit different levels of ability. Plenty of practical resources and activities have been introduced to reinforce calculation skills, rather than just relying on paper and pencil exercises. This is beginning to improve further pupils' achievement in mathematics.
- By the end of Year 6, the most able pupils attain higher than similar groups nationally in English and mathematics. This is also true of pupils who have English as an additional language. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as others within the school.
- Some gaps remain between the attainment of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other pupils, particularly in mathematics. By the end of Year 6, those eligible for free school meals were over two terms behind other pupils in mathematics. However, the school's initiatives in mathematics are now beginning to make better use of assessment to improve pupils' progress. Individual and small group support in mathematics for those eligible for the pupil premium is now more precisely planned and there is some evidence that gaps in attainment are beginning to close, but it is too soon for this work to have had full impact on the achievement of these pupils.
- Overall, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. However, their progress in mathematics is not as rapid as that in English.
- Pupils really enjoy their work in class. In 'big write', they write stories using particular techniques to make them vivid and appealing to the reader. They gain a secure understanding of how to use vocabulary and style. They draft work, go over it themselves or respond to teachers' comments, then willingly redraft to improve it. They review with real interest each other's work and point out strengths and areas for improvement, which reinforces their own writing skills.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Assessment is used well to support pupils' progress. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, observation guides the children's learning experiences. Teachers involve older pupils in responding to the regular marking of their work. As pupils get older, this helps them to build their skills in self-review and editing their own work, and is very effective in developing the ability to write well.
- In mathematics too, there is an emphasis on involving the pupils in assessing their own work. For instance, in a mathematics lesson, the teacher checked a pupil's understanding thoroughly by insisting that the pupil explain what she did not understand; another pupil then explained how to tackle the activity. The first pupil was primed to fully grasp the idea by having thought through her difficulty.

- Teachers make good use of pupils' willingness to work well together. In almost all lessons, after a brief explanation from the teacher of the focus of the learning, pupils move into groups to work together, or individually, on tasks that are at the right level of difficulty for each pupil. The teacher can then distribute attention and engage deeply in pushing some pupils on, without fear of others going off-task.
- A good example of how teachers can rely on pupils to manage their work sensibly and without fuss was seen in an outstanding mathematics lesson. Pupils worked keenly on a timed exercise and then moved seamlessly on to that day's main task, which was already set out, without the teacher needing to say anything. Pupils were clearly aware of what was expected of them.
- Additional adults provide support through one-to-one sessions and small group work. Adults work very patiently and supportively with pupils, but the impact of this teaching is not always checked thoroughly, especially in mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They understand what bullying means, but are very firm in understanding its injustice and stating that it does not happen in their school. This is backed up by how well they work and play together. A parent said that the school is a 'mini United Nations', and pupils are proud of this aspect of their school.
- They willingly take responsibilities such as checking the school's eco-friendliness, or being playground helpers. One group of older pupils ran a library session at lunchtime and organised a register to check attendance at their 'club'.
- They have good opportunities to develop confidence and manage risk sensibly and safely. Pupils have good attitudes to learning, as shown in their willingness to work together and support each other.
- They are very motivated to show how well they are learning. In an assembly that was well attended by parents, every year group played a part in explaining, in very entertaining ways, how they are developing writing skills. In another assembly, they were interested in the spiritual and moral ideas explored by the visiting speaker and some pupils stayed behind at the end to question him further.
- Attendance is average. The school has secured this by emphasising the importance of regular attendance with all families. The school has also worked in close partnership with families whose circumstances have caused them difficulty, with the aim of improving attendance. Some pupils attend the breakfast club, which is well run.

The leadership and management are good

- The dedication of the headteacher sets a good example for staff to follow. Staff who replied to a questionnaire were positive about the school in all respects. They have responded keenly to the leadership's ideas to develop writing and mathematics, so that these approaches are followed in all classes.
- Teachers also respond well to performance management, reflecting and contributing to relevant targets for their professional development. Leaders at middle levels, such as those in charge of subjects, are conscientious in supporting the school's development.
- The headteacher and the governing body are aware that not enough attention has been given to checking the impact of support for disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those eligible for the pupil premium. There are clear plans to tackle this in forthcoming staffing changes by making sure that leaders are allocated enough time to carry out this role.
- The vast majority of parents who responded to the Parent View questionnaire believe that the school is well run and serves their child very well in personal and academic development. This view was enthusiastically endorsed by parents attending assembly when they took an opportunity to talk to inspectors. Their views are also consistent with a survey conducted by the governing body. Inspection evidence confirms that they are right to have confidence. The school

works hard to foster its good relationships with parents.

- School leaders are effective in ensuring all pupils are treated equally and that there is no discrimination.
- Safeguarding procedures meet requirements. A governor liaises regularly with the headteacher to ensure that vigilance is being maintained and there is an annual report and review of policy. Staff training and knowledge of policies are updated regularly.
- The local authority provides helpful analysis of information on pupils' achievement for senior leaders and the governing body to help them decide on priorities for development.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body's close collaboration with the school and its contribution to continuing improvement is strong. Governors ask for regular reports on pupils' progress. They know how well different groups are achieving and how their school's performance compares with the local and national picture. They use the information well to challenge the school to select and pursue priorities for improvement. They are now challenging the school to have broader impact on the progress of pupils who fall behind, including those supported by the pupil premium, which is allocated mainly to these pupils receiving additional support to improve reading. They became aware that achievement in mathematics had not kept pace with improvement in English, and appointed a governor to visit lessons and discuss progress of groups of pupils in mathematics. They encouraged the school to focus on mathematics, which has improved teaching and progress in the subject. Governors make sure that salary progression of teaching staff is firmly linked to meeting performance management goals.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
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

Unique reference number	123211
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	403519

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jill Bentley
Headteacher	Fiona Hawkins
Date of previous school inspection	27–28 September 2007
Telephone number	01865 557178
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