

St Barnabas Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Drove Lane, Market Lavington, Devizes, SN10 4NT

Inspection dates 11–12 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching is too variable in quality. As a result, achievement requires improvement. Pupils' progress and attainment is inconsistent, especially in mathematics and for boys, specifically in writing.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils and are not always clear about what they are expected to gain from the activities they plan.
- Teachers do not always ask challenging questions that make pupils think hard, especially in mathematics.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length in subjects other than English.
- Subject leaders have limited opportunities to check the quality of learning and to evaluate the impact of improvement strategies on pupils' progress in their subject areas.
- Issues from the previous inspection have only been addressed systematically in the last 12 months, and so the impact on improvement has been limited.
- Pupils do not get consistently high-quality feedback to help them to improve their work.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, supported by a much-improved governing body, evaluates the school very accurately, checks the quality of teaching rigorously and has improved progress and the quality of teaching.
- Many pupils make good progress in reading.
- Pupils behave well, feel very safe and are willing learners. Attendance is above average.
- The school provides well for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. They now achieve better than before, as do disadvantaged pupils who benefit from additional funding.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, of which three were joint observations carried out with the headteacher.
- The inspector met with a group of pupils, three members of the governing body, a subject leader and other staff. He also had a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector observed the school's work and looked at a variety of school documentation, including records of the headteacher's monitoring, the school's self evaluation, the school improvement plan, data on pupils' progress and records relating to safeguarding. The inspector also scrutinised pupils' books for evidence of pupils' progress.
- The inspector took account of 23 responses received online from parents and carers (Parent View), letters from three parents and carers, and 12 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

John Laver, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for extra funding through the pupil premium, including pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and pupils from service families, is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are both above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Reception class. Pupils in the rest of the school are taught in three mixed-age classes.
- The present headteacher took up her post just over one year ago. There is no leadership team.
- The school has experienced a considerable fall in its roll during recent years. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils join or leave the school at other than the usual times.
- The school operates an activity club before the beginning of each school day.
- There is a privately run pre-school on the school site. It is subject to separate inspection arrangements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, so that it becomes consistently good, by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils, especially the more able, can achieve in lessons
 - asking more demanding questions that make pupils think harder, notably in mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers know exactly what they expect pupils to learn from the activities they plan
 - improving the consistency of marking and feedback to pupils in order to show them more effectively how to improve their work to the next level
 - improving teachers' expertise in teaching mathematics to a more challenging level in order to boost pupils' attainment and progress.
- Raise attainment and improve progress in writing, especially for boys, by providing them with more opportunities to develop their skills in subject areas other than English.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - further developing the skills and opportunities of subject leaders to check pupils' progress and the quality of teaching in their subject areas and to offer appropriate support to other staff
 - developing their skill in evaluating the impact of strategies for improvement on pupils' progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- The attainment and progress of pupils by the end of Year 6 has not been good for some time, because there has not been enough good teaching. This has been evident in national tests. The 2012 results showed an improvement, which has been sustained, and many pupils are now on track to make better progress. Lesson observations during the inspection, along with the school's own records, confirm both the improved progress overall and the remaining inconsistencies.
- Children have joined this small school with varying levels of skill and ability from year to year. The current Reception class has several pupils whose skills are above age-related expectations in several aspects except writing, where progress is slower.
- In recent years, children and pupils have made faster progress in Reception and Years 1 and 2 than higher up the school, where teaching is more inconsistent. Pupils attained results close to expectations in the most recent Year 1 phonics check (linking letters and sounds) as the result of some good teaching. Improving progress and teaching in Years 5 and 6 is narrowing the gap in attainment between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Attainment is highest in reading. Many pupils read confidently and accurately, and standards are mostly in line with or above national averages.
- Achievement in writing is not as strong as in reading, especially for boys. Some more-able pupils in particular do not achieve as well as they should because teachers do not provide hard enough work. In an English lesson for older pupils, they spent time identifying parts of speech which they already understood instead of moving quickly on to the poetry composition which was supposed to be the focus of the lesson. Additionally, in several subjects, pupils do not get enough opportunities to write at sufficient length or in sufficient depth.
- Progress in mathematics lessons requires improvement usually when teachers keep pupils together for too long, and more-able pupils in particular were observed doing tasks which were too repetitive or low level. For example, younger children and some older pupils were seen working on basic counting exercises in mathematics which they had already mastered.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs now achieve better than before, because they are better supported when they are taught as part of the whole class or in small withdrawal groups.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium have benefited in the last 12 months from extra staff support and other resources. Their attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 is now comparable with other pupils in the school, and to the performance of similar pupils nationally.
- A higher proportion of pupils than is the average nationally join the school at other than the usual points. Although these pupils are quickly integrated into the school, they make slower progress than pupils who have been in the school throughout their school career.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because typically, since the previous inspection, there has not been enough good teaching for pupils to rapidly acquire key skills in literacy and numeracy.
- The headteacher's effective checking of teaching and training for staff has led to improved teaching during the last 12 months, but the quality is still inconsistent, although most parents and carers believe that it is good.
- In lessons requiring improvement, pupils tend to sit and listen to the teacher for too long. The pace of learning flags and teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. When teachers question pupils, they do not always encourage lengthy responses or promote discussion, especially by able pupils. Pupils say that they enjoy lessons, but also that

they prefer 'doing things' to listening to lengthy explanations.

- Teachers plan lesson activities conscientiously, but too often they do not focus sufficiently on what pupils are expected to learn during the lesson. Consequently, activities, especially for more-able pupils, are not sufficiently demanding. For example, when working on history projects, pupils research basic information, and then create a timeline. However, this is not followed by much discussion or writing which would encourage pupils to develop their ideas at length and develop a level of understanding more appropriate to their ages and learning needs.
- Teachers sometimes dominate lessons too much, even in those for younger children who have been given a choice of which activities they would rather do, with the result that they do not always get enough opportunities for real independent learning. Pupils are keen learners and like answering questions, but teachers miss opportunities to develop their responses further, especially in mathematics lessons.
- Where teaching is good, pupils were observed learning rapidly, for example when younger pupils were learning new words, responding enthusiastically to the teacher's lively approach and skilful use of the whiteboard and choice of examples.
- Teachers sometimes mark books well, and encourage pupils to follow up their comments, but the quality of marking is inconsistent. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to their own assessment, but the teaching does not always ensure that pupils' assessment of their work and their understanding of what they are expected to learn in lessons is accurate.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are taught increasingly well. These pupils get good support, and their progress is improving, although it is not yet consistent across the whole school.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The great majority of pupils behave consistently well. They are also keen learners and are very responsive in class. Behaviour is not outstanding because there are a few pupils whose behaviour in lessons and around the school has to be managed very carefully.
- Pupils get on very well with each other. Pupils new to the school are integrated very quickly into what both pupils and parents and carers agree is a very caring community.
- Pupils talk knowledgeably about various types of bullying, such as name-calling and cyber-bullying, but agree that none of these is a significant issue for the school. Pupils feel very safe and appreciate the efforts of staff to support them.
- Older pupils enjoy taking on responsibility. They talk enthusiastically about the school council and opportunities to act as buddies and School Ambassadors. They particularly enjoy helping younger children in the school.
- Pupils greatly appreciate the range of after-school clubs, sporting events and activities such as singing. They particularly enjoy the residential visits to an activity centre.
- Pupils' enjoyment of school and the good links with parents and carers are demonstrated by improved attendance, which is now above the national average.
- Several pupils enjoy starting the school day in the morning activities club, which also encourages good punctuality.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The determined leadership of the headteacher, who has won wide respect from parents and carers, has high expectations of both staff and pupils. Although the leadership is committed to improving key areas such as teaching and achievement, the measures carried out have not had enough time to embed themselves and have a significant impact on overall performance. The school is steadily improving and shows the capacity to improve further, but has not yet produced consistently good teaching or achievement.
- The headteacher has no leadership team, but is now supported by a much-improved governing

body, and she is also supported in her drive for improvement by most staff, as is evident from staff questionnaires. The staff and governors are strongly committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils and the school lives up to its motto of encouraging learning within a caring community, informed by its Christian values.

- The role of subject leaders has developed since the previous inspection. They now analyse data about pupil performance. However, they have limited opportunities to check the quality of teaching and rates of pupils' progress in the classroom, and to help other staff increase their teaching skills, and limited experience in evaluating the impact of the strategies which have been introduced to improve pupils' key skills.
- Managing staff performance in this small school has been a particular challenge, because for some time, pay was not linked to teachers' responsibilities or accountability. Since her appointment, the headteacher has worked hard to rectify this, and staff are now held more accountable for progress and understand the importance of this.
- The checks on the quality of teaching and learning are now much more rigorous and systematic, and are underpinning improvements to the quality of teaching. The school's evaluation of its own performance is now robust and accurate, and plans for improvement are well targeted.
- The funding available through the pupil premium is targeted with increasing effectiveness, for example to provide additional support and resources for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The leadership recognises that achievement of these pupils in some areas, notably writing, should be improved still further.
- The curriculum has a range of topics which interest pupils. There are good opportunities to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils reflect on social and moral issues in assemblies, as observed during the inspection, and in their topic work. The school has developed links with a French school and is developing a link with a London school so pupils can broaden their awareness of different environments.
- The leadership successfully involves parents and carers in their children's learning, for example through reading schemes and inviting parents and carers into school to celebrate pupils' achievements.
- The local authority has provided extensive support for the headteacher, other staff and governors. This programme continues to help increase confidence and expertise. There are partnerships with other local schools, and with the on-site pre-school, but these do not yet have a significant impact on pupils' learning.
- Safeguarding meets requirements and staff are regularly updated on relevant policies and procedures.
- The **governance of the school:**
 - Governance has improved considerably since the previous inspection. Members of the governing body benefit from good-quality training, which enables them to be closely and knowledgeably involved in the school's self-evaluation. They understand the assessment data on progress and the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching. They are active in school, including in monitoring, and also uphold their responsibilities in ensuring that funding through the pupil premium is used appropriately. Governors promote the importance of linking pay, progress and accountability. As well as supporting the headteacher, governors ask challenging questions about the performance of pupils and staff. They manage the process of staff changes and staff development sympathetically but rigorously, with a clear understanding both of where the school has come from and what needs to be done to raise its performance to the next level.

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	126380
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	412293

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	72
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robin Steele
Headteacher	Jill Hibbs
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 March 2010
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