

St Benedict's Infant School

St Benedict's Road, Birmingham, B10 9DP

Inspection dates 5–6 June 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.

- From low starting points, pupils make good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The standards pupils reach by the end of Year 2 are rising. This year they are broadly average, and more pupils are exceeding the levels expected nationally for their age.
- Pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects, because they learn about different subjects such as science, history and geography in reading and writing sessions as well as in specific lessons.
- Nearly all teachers check pupils' learning throughout lessons and make changes when necessary to speed up learning.
- The positive atmosphere in lessons encourages pupils to persevere with tasks that challenge them.
- Behaviour is good and pupils feel safe. Pupils follow the rules and get along very well together in lessons and at playtimes.
- Attendance has improved significantly over the last three years.
- The systems that leaders use to check pupils' learning are effective, and their consequent actions are successful in improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils are not always encouraged to speak in full sentences when answering questions and talking about their ideas and learning.
- Teachers do not consistently make sure that pupils always use correct spellings, punctuation and grammar in their writing.
- Not all teachers are fully effective in meeting the specific language needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 27 lessons taught by 24 teachers. Four were observed jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also made a number of short visits to lessons, some with the assistant headteachers.
- The inspectors heard some pupils read. They looked at past and current information about pupils' progress and their work in books and on display.
- The inspectors met with small groups of pupils to talk about their experience of learning and to find out what they thought about the school. Inspectors also met with staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors looked at documents relating to behaviour and safeguarding, the school's checks on teaching and pupils' progress, and school improvement planning.
- The inspectors talked to parents informally at the start of the day. There were too few responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and so inspectors consulted last year's parent survey carried out by the school to take parents' views into account.
- The inspectors took account of 20 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Georgina Beasley, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Faheem Chishti | Additional Inspector |
| Gwendoline Onyon | Additional Inspector |

Full report

Information about this school

- St Benedict's Infant School is much larger than the average primary school.
- Nearly all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils make up the largest groups.
- Almost all pupils speak English as an additional language.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for certain groups. In this school it applies to pupils who are looked after outside the family or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make more teaching outstanding by ensuring that teachers consistently give pupils:
 - frequent, well-planned opportunities to explain their ideas and thinking in full sentences in lessons
 - more support to help them always use the correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar when writing
 - time and encouragement to respond to guidance on how to improve their work, followed by checking to make sure they have made the changes.
- Make sure all teachers have the training they need to fully meet the specific language needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language in all lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the nursery with knowledge and skills well below those expected for their age in all areas of learning, but especially in speaking. Nearly all speak a language other than English at home and so it takes some time for children to talk confidently in English. Even so, children enjoy taking part in the varied range of stimulating activities and quickly become inquisitive learners. By the end of the Reception they have made good progress in all areas of learning.
- All pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make good progress from their various starting points. Reading standards have improved strongly this year, particularly for girls. Pupils recall reading and listening to favourite stories, and enjoy finding information for learning in a wide range of subjects. They read widely and enjoy swapping books through the 'swap shop' so they can read at home to parents and older brothers and sisters.
- Standards in Years 1 and 2 have risen this year. The 2012 test results reflected a previous pattern of weaknesses in reading and mathematics, but the school has focused on improving standards in these areas and the work seen in lessons and pupils' books shows that this has been successful.
- There has been particular improvement in pupils' knowledge of letters and the sounds they make, and this helps them to work out unfamiliar words when reading. A broadly average proportion of Year 1 pupils reached the expected standard in last year's phonics check. However, pupils do not always use the correct spellings, grammar and punctuation when writing, even when they have learned them in phonics lessons.
- Children's improving knowledge and understanding of numbers and shapes in Reception is helping them to sustain good progress in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Pupils add and subtract numbers confidently, and identify two- and three-dimensional shapes from the number and size of edges, faces and corners.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, including Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils, make good progress overall. Pupils across the school talk confidently about themselves and their personal experiences, but many still find it hard to explain what they are doing and why by talking in full sentences when answering questions about their work. Some use incorrect grammar such as 'letted' instead of 'let' or miss out 'the' when talking about objects.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium make good progress and do better than similar pupils nationally. Pupils who were known to be eligible for free school meals attained higher standards than their classmates in the 2012 Year 2 tests in reading, writing and mathematics. This year, they are about half a term behind but are making good progress in closing the gap. The very small number of pupils who are looked after outside the family make good progress and reach expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is typically good and occasionally outstanding. A consistent strength is the way teachers and the adults who work alongside them in the classroom check pupils' learning throughout lessons and make changes to tasks and activities if they find them too difficult or too easy. This is helping pupils to make good progress in most lessons.

- Pupils enjoy the 'get up and go' activities in mathematics which get them started on solving number and shape problems quickly in lessons where they are used. As a result, even when they have difficulty explaining how they have solved the problem, they can nearly all show the method they have used.
- Reading is taught well. A strong focus on developing vocabulary is helping more-able pupils to understand the meaning of words and phrases when they read. Reading of well-chosen books makes a good contribution to pupils' learning in history, geography, science and religious education.
- Teachers ask probing questions that encourage pupils to talk about what they are learning and why. Some teachers expect pupils to answer in full sentences, demonstrating the correct way for pupils to copy when necessary. However, not all teachers use this approach regularly enough. As a result, only more-able pupils do this naturally.
- Teachers check pupils' work regularly, giving them pointers on what they have done well and what needs to be improved. When checking writing, teachers do not always set clear expectations that pupils should use the correct spelling, grammar and punctuation that they already know. In some lessons pupils are not given enough support to help them remember to do this by themselves, and they are not always given enough time to respond to guidance by correcting their mistakes.
- Adults in the Nursery and Reception classes plan activities that enable children to think for themselves how to investigate and solve real problems. For example, during the inspection a group of children were engrossed in trying to get their home-made kites to fly higher. Some were running faster while others attached longer pieces of string. Even though many could not explain by talking, adults helped them to show what they were thinking by acting it out.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' very positive attitudes make a significant contribution to good learning in lessons. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect, and are polite and attentive at all times. They join in with class and group activities, helping each other out in lessons if someone gets stuck.
 - Playtimes are amicable and enjoyable times. The pupil premium funding has provided training for staff in leading play activities at lunchtimes. This has resulted in pupils sharing a range of toys and resources which they use creatively in playing games with their friends.
 - Parents who spoke to inspectors are confident that their child feels safe and that behaviour is good. Pupils also say they feel safe. They learn how to keep themselves safe in personal, social and health education lessons and through special events. They are clear about what to do if they see something on the computer that they do not like.
 - Pupils know about different kinds of bullying and are clear that it rarely happens, if ever. They say, 'Everyone is friendly and kind,' and are clear what happens if anyone misbehaves. They respond immediately when adults ask them to 'show me five' by sitting still, watching the adult and listening attentively and very quickly when asked.
 - Attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection due to the school's successful drive to ensure every pupil comes to school unless they are ill. Parents attend
-

meetings to discuss their child's attendance if it falls below 90% to agree ways to improve it. Pupils' punctuality is promoted well by the safe and well-organised start and end to the school day.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has established a timetable of activities for checking the quality of teaching which includes having regular conversations with staff and pupils about their work, observing learning in lessons and analysing the information the school has about pupils' progress. As a result, the school has an accurate view of how well it is doing.
 - All staff, including year leaders and teachers who lead subjects, are involved in checking regularly that individuals and groups of pupils are making the progress they should. Any pupils identified as being in danger of falling behind are given appropriate extra help to catch up, which is checked again to make sure it is having the intended impact.
 - The school provides appropriate training to support the areas of teaching identified as needing improvement in teachers' individual performance management plans. This has led to improvements in teaching across the school. The training to develop knowledge and understanding of how to support the particular language skills of pupils who speak English as an additional language has not been specific enough for some staff.
 - The rich and interesting learning experiences through a range of subjects promote pupils' strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Shared activities with partner schools abroad help pupils to develop increasing knowledge and respect for people who live in different countries. Pupils have a growing awareness of their own religions and cultures and those of others through the school's community day and numerous visits, visitors and celebrations of religious and non-religious festivals.
 - The local authority keeps a watchful eye on the school's performance and makes regular contact to check that it is satisfied with the level of support given. Its support for staff training has resulted in improvement in the quality of teaching across the school, and especially in the Nursery and Reception classes where reading and mathematics are taught to small groups.
 - Equal opportunities are promoted well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, especially those with a statement of special educational needs, receive good support to enable them to learn well and make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. The teaching of pupils in ability groups has resulted in more pupils reaching higher levels this year, particularly in reading and mathematics.
 - Pupil premium funding helps to ensure that all pupils are able to take part in planned activities, and its use is checked closely, including by the governors, to make sure it is raising the achievement of eligible pupils. Staff training in mathematics and reading resulted in improvements in these subjects this year. Extra funding for family learning is helping parents to support their children's learning at home, especially through reading, and has made a considerable contribution to improved attendance.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governors are clear about the school's strengths and understand what needs to improve. Suitable training has given them the knowledge they need to ask the school probing questions about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress when checking that the money they have
-

allocated is being spent efficiently. They use this information and the results of the appraisal of teachers to make decisions about staff pay rises and promotion. Safeguarding arrangements are monitored closely to ensure that they meet national requirements.

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 | 103261 |
| Local authority | Birmingham |
| Inspection number | 412672 |

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

| | |
|--|------------------------------|
| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 572 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Roger Hale |
| Headteacher | Armine Williams |
| Date of previous school inspection | 26 November 2008 |
| Telephone number | 0121 464 6420 |
| Fax number | 0121 464 6485 |
| Email address | enquiry@stbendic.bham.sch.uk |

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013

