

St Barnabas Church of England Primary School, Market Lavington

Drove Lane, Market Lavington, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 4NT

Inspection dates 11–12 March 2015

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The headteacher has taken a firm and resolute approach to the leadership of the school. The assistant headteacher and governors offer good support. As a result, the school is improving.
- The headteacher has had a good impact because of her strong leadership of teaching, which has improved its quality.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate and leads to improvement planning of good quality.
- Pupils' achievement is good. Their rates of progress have improved and are good.
- Pupils' standards by the end of Year 6 and by the end of Year 2 have risen.
- Pupils behave well. They show very positive attitudes to learning. They feel safe at school.
- The good quality of teaching leads to pupils' improved progress. Teachers' high expectations have served to raise pupils' achievement.
- The school gives priority to reading, writing and mathematics. It also promotes human values and provides good support for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teachers and assistants are skilful in fostering good working relationships with pupils.
- Children get off to a good start in the early years.
- Children in the Reception class achieve well because of the good quality of the teaching.
- Governors are supportive of the school, but also have the knowledge to hold school leaders to good account.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils make rapid enough progress to reach the higher levels of attainment in writing and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always set work that is difficult enough for the different groups of pupils.
- Teachers' feedback from marking pupils' work does not consistently point out what pupils need to do next in order to improve further.
- The school's target-setting arrangements for pupils do not help them sufficiently to understand what they need to do to reach higher standards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed six lessons, of which three were joint observations with the headteacher. He also scrutinised samples of pupils' work in English and mathematics. He heard a sample of pupils in Years 1 and 2 read.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, members of the school's staff, the Chair, Vice Chair and two other members of the governing body. A meeting was held with the school's improvement adviser representing the local authority.
- The inspector analysed the 22 responses that were recorded on the online survey (Parent View) by the end of the inspection. He also received a letter from one parent.
- The inspector took account of the seven responses to the questionnaire for school staff.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current attainment and progress, planning documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding, the monitoring of teaching, performance management, the use of extra government funding and the curriculum.

Inspection team

Christopher Grove, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This primary school is much smaller than average.
- The school is situated in the small town of Market Lavington to the south of Devizes in Wiltshire, and draws most of its pupils from the local area.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (which provides additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care) is more than one quarter of all pupils. This is above average. However, there were few of these disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is about one in every five pupils. This is above average.
- When the school was last inspected, there were four mixed-age classes. There are now three.
- The early years provision consists of a full-time Reception class which also includes the pupils in Year 1.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced some changes in the teaching staff.
- The before-school Early Birds club is managed by the governing body and formed part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment, especially in writing and mathematics, and increase the proportion of pupils who make rapid progress, by ensuring that teachers more consistently:
 - provide a close match of tasks to the prior attainment of pupils of different abilities, and ensure that there is always enough challenge to help pupils to fulfil their potential
 - give pupils improved feedback from marking so that they fully understand what they need to do to take the next steps in their learning
 - make better use of target-setting arrangements in order to build on pupils' eagerness to learn.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher has set a clear direction for the school and has shown that she is ambitious for its improvement. She has adopted a firm and resolute approach to leadership. With the good support of the governing body, she has appointed an assistant headteacher and created a senior leadership team. The new team is having a positive impact. The assistant headteacher has taken on responsibility for the early years and for provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. There have also been staff changes, and this has allowed a new teacher to be appointed.
- The headteacher has had considerable impact and has done much towards strengthening the school's positive Christian ethos. She has formed an effective team of middle leaders, who have taken responsibility for mathematics and religious education. The middle leaders are involved in the full range of activities to check the quality of teaching and learning in their subject areas.
- Through a programme of mentoring and coaching (developing the skills and techniques of the teaching staff), the headteacher has provided strong leadership of teaching. The result is that the quality of teaching has improved and is now consistently good. In addition, the headteacher has made sure that the school's systems, for example to track pupils' academic achievement or to comply with expectations about safeguarding, are rigorously maintained.
- The leadership's checking of the school's performance has accurately identified strengths and weaknesses. The resulting improvement planning is of good quality.
- The improved rates of progress by all groups of pupils indicate the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.
- There is clear staff support for the direction being taken. Those members of staff who completed the questionnaire agreed that they are proud of the school and know what they are trying to achieve as a school.
- The school gives priority to developing pupils' knowledge and skills in reading, writing and mathematics. In keeping with its Christian foundation, the school's curriculum emphasises values by including topics of wider significance, such as Fairtrade. The school teaches about Islam and other world religions as well as Christianity. In the programme of collective worship, topics such as 'compassion' are explored. In these various ways, the school promotes tolerance in pupils as well as providing good support for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Other topics such as the focus on twentieth-century British history help to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- The school makes good use of its primary sport funding. The funding has been used to provide a coaching programme to increase teachers' understanding and confidence to teach gymnastics and aspects of physical education. In addition, the funding supports swimming for pupils in Years 1 to 6, and enables participation in a wide range of local sporting opportunities.
- The school uses the additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils to good effect in a variety of ways. Currently, the funding is mainly used to provide additional teaching assistant support for pupils working towards short-term targets, or small-group work on aspects of literacy and mathematics with an additional teacher. Spending has also included the employment of a parent support adviser to support vulnerable families, and the training of a teaching assistant to provide speech and language therapy.
- Leaders focus meticulously on all aspects of child protection and safeguarding, which fully meet requirements.
- The local authority has provided regular support for the school's improvement through the so-called effectiveness review meetings held each term. At these meetings, the school's evidence about its performance is reviewed in detail. The authority is confident in the school's capacity because of the leadership's systematic approach and the accuracy of its self-evaluation.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are supportive of the school, but also know how to play the role of 'critical friend'. They have a secure understanding of the school's context and know how well pupils are achieving compared to those in other schools. They also know about the quality of teaching. Governors undertake the appraisal of the headteacher's performance to good effect each year. They are well informed about the arrangements to set targets for other staff. The headteacher consults them about whether salary progression is warranted. They know that her recommendations are based on judgements of teachers' performance. Governors meet their statutory obligations. They also know that the headteacher has robustly tackled underperformance in the past. Governors have the knowledge to hold the school to good account.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school's supportive Christian ethos, and adults' high expectations, do much to promote pupils' good behaviour. The pupils themselves say that other pupils are typically well behaved.
- Pupils show a real eagerness to learn. In the classroom, their attitudes to learning are very positive. They are very attentive to their teachers, and settle quickly, for example when they move from their tables to the carpet during lessons. They respond willingly to their teachers, for instance in answering questions. When asked to cooperate with others, they do so readily.
- Pupils move about the building in a sensible way and are polite towards the adults whom they meet around the school, and towards visitors. They enter and leave the hall for assemblies in an orderly and respectful way. The older pupils enjoy their roles in assemblies, such as responsibility for the music played on entry and exit, and carry out their roles confidently and efficiently.
- At lunchtimes in the school hall, pupils enjoy the opportunities to talk with others. This makes mealtimes, including the Mothers' Day lunch attended by a good number of parents, a very pleasant experience. At breaktimes, pupils behave well in the playground and enjoy the opportunities for social contact, although pupils say that there is the occasional dispute about football.
- All those members of staff who completed the questionnaire agreed that pupils' behaviour is good and is consistently well managed. Most parents who took part in the survey agreed that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.
- Behaviour is not outstanding. The school reports that it has worked successfully with the local authority's behaviour support service to manage the very occasional instances of challenging behaviour by pupils with emotional needs.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been no permanent exclusions, and few fixed-term exclusions.
- Attendance has remained above the national average.
- Those pupils who attend the Early Birds activities club have an enjoyable start to the school day. Participation in the club also serves to support good attendance.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe at school because there are always adults on duty. They learn how to keep themselves safe and how to deal with risks, such as exercising caution about strangers. They know of the need to exercise care when accessing the internet or using e-mail.
- Almost every parent, and all the members of staff who took part in their respective surveys, agreed that pupils are safe at the school.
- Pupils recognise the different forms that bullying can take. They say that there is little bullying and are confident that adults deal quickly with any problems between pupils that occasionally arise.
- In the staff survey, all respondents agreed that the school deals effectively with any cases of bullying. Most parents who took part in the online survey took the same view.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is now consistently good across the school and leads to pupils' good progress and learning. This includes the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics.
- The teachers and their assistants are adept at fostering good and trusting working relationships with pupils. This, in turn, results in the warm atmosphere for learning in all the classrooms, and the calm and supportive ethos in the whole school.
- In their responses to the online survey, almost every parent agreed that their children are well taught and make good progress. Inspection evidence supports their views.
- The headteacher has set high expectations for the teaching staff. As a result, teachers hold similarly high expectations for pupils' achievement. Such expectations have had a positive impact in improving pupils' progress and raising their attainment.
- One expectation is that teachers will set tasks that are well matched to the wide range of prior attainment in the mixed-age classes. In a lesson about writing a script for a film, for instance, one teacher had

identified five levels of prior attainment in the class. The teacher had adapted the task set for each of these five groups in order to provide an appropriate degree of challenge. Pupils responded well to the demands made of them. For example, the most able pupils successfully included semi-colons in their work to indicate closely related clauses.

- However, there is sometimes scope to improve the closeness of the match of tasks to the different pupil groups. Teachers do not consistently set work that is sufficiently difficult for each group. Consequently, the overall quality of teaching is not yet outstanding.
- Teachers make effective use of their questions to pupils. For instance, they do not consistently stretch pupils to the extent that they could by challenging them to explain their understanding. However, an instance of good practice was observed in a mathematics lesson about three-dimensional shapes. Having concealed some examples of shapes in a 'feely bag', the teacher challenged nominated pupils to feel one of the shapes and to describe it to the class in terms of its number of edges, faces and vertices. This promoted learning very effectively as the other pupils then had to deduce the name of the shape.
- Teachers make effective use of the teaching assistants. As a result, assistants make a range of good contributions, including to the learning of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- In their marking of pupils' work, teachers provide encouragement and offer praise. However, teachers do not consistently give pupils helpful pointers as to what they need to do next to improve their work. As a result, teachers' feedback does not lead to improvements in pupils' learning to the extent that it could.
- The school has target-setting arrangements but these do not contribute as fully as they could to pupils' understanding of what they should do to reach higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is in the process of developing its approach to assessment. This provides a good opportunity to review how target setting for pupils could better harness their positive attitudes to learning so as to have greater impact on their achievement.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' greatly improved rates of progress across the school show the positive impact of the very effective action by the school's leadership since the last inspection. The result is that pupils in all year groups are now typically making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2014, overall attainment by the end of Year 6 was higher than at the time of the previous inspection, because of pupils' improving progress. There was improvement in attainment at the Level 4, especially in writing and mathematics. In a school with small year groups, some variability in performance is likely, reflecting their different characteristics. As a result, the number of pupils who gained the higher Level 5 was below the national average in mathematics and especially in writing.
- In 2014, the proportions of pupils who made expected rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics exceeded national figures. However, too few pupils made the more rapid progress necessary to reach the highest attainment levels.
- Since the last inspection, attainment by the end of Year 2 has also risen in reading, writing and mathematics. In reading and mathematics, the proportions of pupils who reached the higher Level 3 standard of attainment were above average.
- In 2014, there was evident improvement in pupils' success rates in the Year 1 national phonics screening check (this checks pupils' understanding of letters and the sounds they make). Results improved to broadly average from below average in 2013.
- The small numbers of the most able pupils make good progress. This is because teachers often give them suitably challenging tasks. However, not a high enough proportion attain as well as they could in writing by the end of Year 2, and in mathematics and especially in writing by the end of Year 6. The school's stronger results in reading indicate that there is scope for further improvement in attainment in writing and mathematics.
- The school's evidence shows that disabled pupils and those with special educational needs mostly make good progress. Teachers and assistants offer them good support and meet their needs well.
- In the case of disadvantaged pupils, also, the good support of teachers and assistants typically leads to their good progress. There were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 in 2014 to be able to draw valid conclusions about whether any gaps in performance between these pupils and other pupils have widened or narrowed.

The early years provision**is good**

- Children achieve well in the early years.
- Their knowledge and skills when they first come to school span a broad range and show considerable variability, but in general they are below those typically found. In particular, the personal skills of some children, including their self-confidence, their skills in making relationships and skills in managing their feelings and behaviour, are not always well developed.
- Most children reach or exceed expectations by the end of the Reception year. Given their starting points on entry to the school, this represents good progress in reading, writing and number work, and in all the other areas of the curriculum. The school prepares children well for entry to Year 1.
- Good progress is the result of the good quality of the teaching. The teacher and the assistant are particularly skilled at developing good working relationships with children. They have created an attractive classroom space and set a warm climate which together do much to support children's learning.
- A strong aspect of teaching is the emphasis given to phonics (linking letters with the sounds that they make). For instance, in one lesson, the teacher focused on the sound made by 'ai' in words such as 'sail'. The children then concentrated closely on practising the writing of similar sounding words, such as 'train'.
- The teaching also provides other sorts of opportunities. For example, in another lesson, the children first learned about the various parts of a plant, such as the stem and the root, and about the conditions necessary for growth, such as soil and water. The teacher had set up a range of stimulating practical activities indoors and in the outside area. While some enjoyed the opportunity to do planting, others painted pictures of flowers or made a wormery and read about worms. Another group had the challenge of including interesting adjectives in their writing about plants. In such ways, the children benefit from the good range and variety of learning opportunities on offer.
- The children feel safe and secure. As a result, and because of the high expectations that the teacher has set, they behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. For example, they listen intently to the adults and are eager to respond to their questions. The teacher and the assistant also make good use of praise to encourage children's achievement. Consequently, children develop good personal and communication skills, whatever their starting points.
- The leadership of the early years teacher is good. She offers a clear sense of direction and is accurate in evaluating the early years provision. She regularly tracks children's progress to good effect. For instance, in 2012/13, there was a gap between boys' attainment and that of girls in reading and more particularly in writing. In the following year, the school successfully reduced the gap in reading and closed the gap in writing. Current action planning rightly aims to make further improvements to provision.

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	453821

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	70
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bridget Herniman
Headteacher	Jill Hibbs
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 April 2013
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