

St Julian's Church School

Wellow, Bath, Somerset BA2 8QS

Inspection dates

25–26 September 2018

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Outstanding |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since her appointment in January 2018, the executive headteacher has raised expectations for staff and pupils. As a result, pupils achieved in line with or above the national average in progress and attainment in the end of key stage tests in the summer of 2018.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Consequently, planning is effective and actions have an impact on the correct areas for development.
- Pupils behave well in and around school. They show respect for each other, staff and visitors.
- Pupils feel safe and are safe. The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe.
- Most teaching in mathematics provides work that is at a suitable level for pupils. This has led to improvements in pupils' achievement in mathematics.
- Pupils attend school regularly because they enjoy the many enriching activities that school leaders offer.
- Parents are positive about the school and its placement in the community. They value the clear and precise communications from leaders.
- Children in Reception are settling in well and benefiting from the new outdoor area that has been built this summer.
- Too often, teachers do not intervene quickly enough when pupils' learning falls behind. Their progress is not accelerating quickly enough.
- Equally, the most able pupils are not achieving the higher standards in the core subjects, as there is a lack of suitable challenge for pupils.
- Middle leaders are not yet trained to hold teachers to account in the areas for which they are responsible. This reduces the capacity for improvement in subjects in the wider curriculum.
- Literacy work, writing in particular, is covered within a range of subjects. As yet, teachers are not planning specifically enough. Too often, pupils are set similar work which does not reflect their individual strengths nor support their weaknesses.
- There are too few disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities to comment on their progress, especially for the most able.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - middle leaders are enabled to provide accountability within their areas in the curriculum
 - teachers' planning improves pupils' progress, especially in writing, regardless of their starting points
 - progress of pupils who are achieving below expectations accelerates so that they catch up more quickly
 - more pupils gain higher standards, especially in the core subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The executive headteacher oversees two smaller-than-average rural schools. Since her appointment, there have been many staffing changes, including three changes of the chair of governors of the federation. Despite this, she has remained focused on the salient aspects of improvement, such as ensuring that pupils are well prepared for the next phase of their education.
- The executive headteacher has noted the change in demographics, which has meant that many more pupils arrive in-year and often with complex needs. She and the special educational needs coordinator make early assessments to meet pupils' needs effectively.
- Leaders set high expectations of pupils and staff. They are role models for the school community and have created a culture of respect and tolerance. Following a period of turbulence, relationships in the school are positive. This has helped support the rapid progress of many pupils.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the quality of education. As a result, they plan, check and evaluate actions to improve all key aspects of the school's work.
- Professional development supports teachers well, especially those who need to refine subject knowledge. Consequently, teaching is improving rapidly. Leaders and governors are monitoring the impact of teaching more often and more effectively now.
- The curriculum provides a wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn, including many visits locally and international exchanges. For example, pupils from Years 1 and 2 visited Wells Cathedral on the first day of the inspection.
- The curriculum helps pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills as well as contributing to their physical, mental and personal well-being and safety.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key feature of the school. The Christian ethos pervades all that the pupils do, while visitors, such as humanists and Hindu preachers, alert them to the diversity of beliefs and customs.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders take early and appropriate action to identify pupils who may be at risk of neglect, abuse or sexual exploitation. Staff report concerns quickly so that they are dealt with swiftly.
- Staff and leaders protect pupils from the influences of radicalisation and extremism.

Governance of the school

- There have been many changes to governance in the past year. Despite this, there is strength in governance. Governors have a commitment to the school and its place in the community.
- Governors are linked more closely to the workings of the school now, and are developing systems of accountability in their roles.
- Governors have not challenged the spending of pupil premium and funding for SEN

diligently. They have not ensured that they are aware of the academic progress of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Therefore, they are not secure in their understanding of the impact of any initiatives.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The site is safe and secure. Older pupils, who have parental permission to walk home, spoke of how adults ensure that they cross the road safely at the end of the day.
- Leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. The safeguarding policy is up to date. Leaders were slow to put the most recent Department for Education (DfE) guidelines on the website because of the imminent academisation. However, staff have been suitably trained in the most recent changes to safeguarding procedures. Pupils feel safe and secure in school.
- Staff work sensitively with parents and external agencies to monitor and support the more vulnerable pupils.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers' expectations of good conduct by pupils are high. As a result, pupils are ready and willing to learn.
- Most teachers give pupils feedback in line with the school's assessment policy. Pupils use this feedback well and know what they need to do to improve. Pupils understand the system well. Pupils have the capacity to learn from mistakes. Older pupils are aware that it is their responsibility to correct their work and follow the teacher's next steps. As yet, they are not doing this independently.
- When teachers give sufficient time for pupils to review what they are learning, pupils develop further speedily.
- Homework is a strength of the school. From Reception onwards, pupils work on exciting and creative tasks that enrich and consolidate learning. Often, homework is a model-making exercise. So, on the first day of the inspection, pupils were bringing models of stone-age dwellings into school.
- Teachers are helping pupils develop reading, writing, communication and mathematics well. The teaching of mathematics has developed more quickly than literacy in the past twelve months. Teachers are more adept at setting work that challenges and supports pupils precisely, according to their ability.
- Younger pupils are benefiting from high-quality teaching of phonics. Reading is improving because pupils use their phonics skills well to tackle unfamiliar words. They have a secure understanding of the sounds that letters and letter blends make.
- Pupils are eager learners who want to find out more. They are willing to find out new information to develop, consolidate and deepen their knowledge and teachers provide this in the best learning moments.
- Parents receive accurate information about their children's progress in relation to the standards expected, and about what their children need to do to improve. In addition,

they receive an overview of their children's personal and social development.

- There is no derogatory language in and around the school. Teachers promote equality of opportunity and diversity through the many enriching experiences offered. There are links with Bath University, visits to the Harry Potter studios in London and Skype conversations with pupils in France.
- Teachers' planning is not yet sophisticated enough to allow for immediate intervention when pupils misunderstand or hold misconceptions. Currently, assessment information is gathered every six weeks. It is used to identify and support those pupils who start to fall behind.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured. They take pride in their work, their school and their appearance.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are positive and have a good impact on their progress.
- Pupils listen respectfully to others' ideas and views. Frequently, pupils help each other willingly and without prompting.
- Parents, staff and pupils have no well-founded concerns about personal development, behaviour and welfare.
- Pupils were not aware of any bullying incidents but felt that there were adults in whom they could confide if there were concerns.
- There is an open and trusting culture in the school. Pupils are safe and feel safe. Older pupils have frequent opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe. Younger pupils are less aware of how to keep themselves safe beyond fire practice drills.
- Older pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to manage their own learning. This stifles their curiosity and personal independence in righting any wrongs within their work.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well and respect their environment.
- There is no disruption to learning.
- Pupils behave responsibly at breaktimes and lunchtimes. The school playground has demarcations that promote learning, such as number squares and a road track. These are recent additions. Pupils spoke of their pleasure in using them.
- From arrival to close of the school day, there is a joyous as well as an orderly environment. Pupils are friendly yet respectful to adults and visitors. They respond

quickly to instructions and requests from staff, allowing lessons to flow smoothly.

- Recent changes and expectations have made pupils more punctual.
- Pupils' enjoyment of learning means that they are ready for, and engaged in, activities.
- Few pupils are absent or persistently absent. The executive headteacher keeps a close eye on any who are absent. She has reduced persistent absence through educating parents in the value of pupils' regular attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In the end of key stage tests in 2018, pupils in Year 2 and 6 made strong progress in each area of the examined curriculum.
- Pupils enjoy books from Reception onwards. There are effective systems in place to ensure that pupils read regularly at home and at school. Consequently, most pupils read fluently and comprehend their books, which are appropriate to their age. Successful phonics teaching supports younger pupils who struggle to read.
- Pupils' progress is above average in the core subjects of English and mathematics in most year groups. Leaders are aware of the issues for a minority of younger pupils, especially boys. Leaders are working with teachers to help these pupils to make better progress by adopting different ways of learning.
- Pupils in Year 6 in 2018 were well prepared for the transition to secondary education. Most children in Reception were ready for their more demanding work in Year 1.
- Leaders and teachers support disadvantaged pupils' welfare well. Their academic progress is improving. There are too few pupils to be able to comment in detail on the progress of the most-able disadvantaged.
- Similarly, there are very few pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The SEN coordinator makes timely interventions to support their needs. She considers pupils' welfare carefully as well as their academic progress. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making good progress, dependent on their different abilities.
- The most able pupils achieve well and gain the higher standards in literacy and mathematics. However, there are not enough of the middle-ability pupils who achieve the higher standards in literacy and mathematics.
- Progress in the wider curriculum is not monitored effectively yet. Pupils undertake tasks in a wide range of subjects, but planning across the school lacks consideration of sequential steps and skills.

Early years provision

Good

- The leader of Reception is new to post. She has evaluated the strengths and weaknesses of the provision well. There has been much work done to improve the outside area. Children have more opportunity to work on the many areas of their early learning goals with new and exciting equipment to stimulate their interest.
- The Reception teacher has been in post for two years. More children achieved a good level of development (GLD) in 2018 than in previous years. This is a testament to the

training provided by school leaders and experts from the local authority. Children are ready for Year 1. The majority of children were able to write sentences clearly and complete numerical calculations relevant to their age.

- Children are assessed as soon as they arrive at school. Early and timely interventions are made to ensure that children make effective progress. External advisers support these assessments. For example, an occupational therapist helps to determine children's agility with fine and gross motor skills. This expertise helps children to develop quickly and in a supportive environment.
- Regular and precise assessments of children's learning and development help staff to plan activities that are suitably challenging for children.
- Staff work well with parents and involve them fully with the initial assessments. Parents are well informed about children's progress as the year moves on.
- Children take books home to gain a love of literacy and enjoy the story telling even though their reading skills are not yet advanced. Parents appreciate the workshops and advice provided about learning at home.
- Children are able to apply their own learning to solve problems. They are often provided with the challenge that they need to make good progress.
- Children respond well to adults. They take responsibility for their actions eagerly. They are keen to learn. Although the children are new to school life, they show resilience and tenacity over an extended time when allowed to do so.
- Children's personal and social development is strong because the staff know the children well. Activities are set up where children can integrate, learn to share and take turns without undue fuss and bother.
- Children are safe and the safeguarding practices are robust.

School details

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|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Unique reference number | 109210 |
| Local authority | Bath and North East Somerset Council |
| Inspection number | 10047953 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Voluntary controlled |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 111 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Brian Edwards |
| Headteacher | Ruth Noall |
| Telephone number | 01225 833 143 |
| Website | www.stjuliansprimary.co.uk |
| Email address | stjulians_pri@bathnes.gov.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 30 April–1 May 2012 |

Information about this school

- St Julian's Church School is smaller than the average primary school. It is a member of the Church Valley Schools Federation.
- The headteacher was appointed in January 2018.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is below the national average.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2017, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Pupils from Years 1 and 2 visited Wells Cathedral on Day 1 of the inspection.
- The lead inspector visited lessons jointly with the headteacher.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised.
- The lead inspector talked with groups of pupils from key stages 1 and 2, as well as with pupils informally across the site.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body and the local authority school improvement partner.
- Information and other documentary evidence were evaluated, including that relating to safeguarding, assessment, school evaluation and external reviews.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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