

Inspection of St Barnabas Church of England VC Primary School

Albany Road, Montpelier, Bristol BS6 5LQ

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders at the school are ambitious for pupils to engage in a curriculum that will excite them and relate to their context, but this is not yet fully in place. Leaders and governors are driving improvements forward, in order for their vision to be achieved. However, the quality of education pupils receive is still not good enough.

Staff know and understand their pupils well. They want them to succeed. The behaviour of some pupils still hinders their own learning and that of others. Leaders are aware of this and are working hard to support those pupils who struggle. Too many pupils come to school late.

Pupils say they feel safe. They are confident that they can approach staff with any concerns or worries they may have. Pupils say there is no bullying. At times, pupils fall out with one another, but staff help to make things better.

The school's motto, 'Let our light shine', is well known by the school community. Pupils understand the school values and can discuss how they impact on them.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have recently undertaken a complete review of the curriculum. They have adopted a new approach to ensure that it meets the needs of the pupils within this diverse community. Leaders have gone back to the core of each subject and considered exactly what pupils need to learn. However, current gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding mean that they are not yet catching up quickly enough.

Curriculum plans do not take into account gaps in pupils' learning. As a result, teachers are unable to provide challenge and support to pupils effectively. The curriculum does not support pupils' language development well enough including in the early years.

Some children do not get a quick enough start to phonics when they start school. Consequently, when they leave Reception, too few are ready for Year 1. For some pupils, their lack of phonic knowledge hinders their progress in reading and writing. The help that staff provide to pupils in key stage 2 is not supporting pupils sufficiently well. Leaders have raised the profile of reading. Class stories, investment in high-quality reading materials and staff training are beginning to make a difference. Pupils are positive about reading and enjoy the books they are given.

In mathematics, there has been a slower start to improvement. Gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are now being addressed but older pupils still have a way to go to catch up. Resources are not always well matched to the activities planned thus learning is slowed for some. It is a similar picture in geography. Gaps

in pupils' knowledge mean that teachers are having to revisit basic geographical terms before moving pupils' learning forward.

Children with complex social and emotional needs are well supported to get ready for learning. While many pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning, there are still times where children who struggle with behaviour disrupt the learning of others.

Leaders' actions have led to improvements in pupils' overall attendance. Close work with families is helping to raise parents' understanding of the importance of attending school regularly. However, although reducing, rates of absence still remain too high. In addition, too many pupils come to school late. When this happens, learning is disrupted for themselves and for others.

Staff provide meaningful experiences for pupils to develop into responsible citizens. Many pupils enjoy the part they can play in a variety of teams including the school council, mini police, digital leaders and the 'Shine Crew'. As a result, pupils develop in confidence and make purposeful contributions to the school.

Leaders have been successful in ensuring that teacher subject knowledge is secure. In particular, improvements to how the curriculum is designed support pupils with SEND to overcome their barriers to their learning. Staff appreciate that leaders are aware of the workload pressures on them and how these are managed.

The majority of parents and carers are positive about the school. They say their children are happy and safe. Leaders' effective engagement with parents, for example when consulting on the relationships and health education programme, ensures that parents have a clear understanding of the curriculum being introduced. Several parents of children with SEND praised the support their children receive.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a positive culture of safeguarding. Leaders accurately identify pupils who require early help. Governors are vigilant in their duties and check safeguarding procedures in the school to ensure that all children are safe.

Staff are knowledgeable about the community they serve. This helps them to be aware of any potential risks. Consequently, staff provide appropriate and timely support for vulnerable families. Leaders ensure that staff have had relevant safeguarding training in order to understand the processes and procedures involved in keeping children safe. The school's inclusion team work well with outside agencies to provide suitable care for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The development of children’s language acquisition across the school has not been good enough in the past. As a result, pupils across the school are not being exposed to a wide range of vocabulary. Consequently, pupils’ language acquisition is slowed. Leaders need to ensure that pupils are provided with a vocabulary-rich environment and staff model appropriate sentence construction to support pupils’ language development.
- The curriculum is not sufficiently well thought out to tackle gaps in pupils’ knowledge. Pupils do not catch up quickly enough. Leaders need to ensure that their new curriculum model supports all pupils to achieve well.
- Poor behaviour from some pupils is affecting the learning of others. The school needs to improve behaviour and attitudes of pupils through developing an engaging and relevant curriculum. Pupils’ attendance and lateness also need to improve.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child’s school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, ‘[disadvantaged pupils](#)’ refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	109144
Local authority	Bristol City of
Inspection number	10122329
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	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kate Matheson
Headteacher	Jon Barr
Website	www.st-barnabasprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up post since the last inspection.
- St Barnabas is a voluntary-controlled church school. The school is in the Diocese of Bristol.
- At the most recent section 48 inspection of denominational education in June 2018, the school received a judgement of good.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with governors and spoke to representatives from the local authority.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and geography. We met with leaders to talk about curriculum implementation. We visited lessons. We looked at pupils' books and talked to them about their work. We spoke with teachers from the lessons visited. An inspector listened to pupils read.

- We talked with teachers, teaching assistants and other members of school staff. An inspector met with staff to talk about their workload.
- We talked to pupils about their life at school. We observed pupils as they played outside at break and during lunchtimes.
- We looked to see how the school keeps pupils safe. We checked the school's records and procedures. We asked staff across the school how they keep pupils safe. We also asked pupils what they did if they had a worry or concern.
- An inspector met with parents at the start of the school day. We looked at the 14 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Marcia Northeast

Ofsted Inspector

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