



St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104359
LEA Wolverhampton
Inspection number 277141
Inspection dates 29 November 2005 to 30 November 2005
Reporting inspector David Carrington RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Sedgley Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Penn
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV4 5LG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 558 855
Number on roll	364	Fax number	01902 558 856
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev. Fraser Williams
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2000	Headteacher	Mr Paul Thomas

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Bartholomew's CE Primary is larger than most primary schools. Just under a third of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. A below average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities and no-one has a statement of special educational need. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. When children start in the Nursery, their attainment is above average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Bartholomew's CE Primary School is a good school. It has a very realistic picture of its successes and areas for improvement. Its assessment of these matches that of the inspection team. This understanding is found not just amongst the key managers; other staff and the governors know their school well. Most pupils do well in school, and progress is good. Progress is particularly marked in mathematics and science though higher-attaining pupils in English are not challenged sufficiently. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good; pupils work from a rich curriculum and their personal development is well fostered, especially their behaviour. The teaching of English is the current focus for improvement in school, which is a well-judged priority. There are insufficient opportunities in lessons for pupils to self review their learning. There is good quality provision for Nursery and Reception children. They make good progress and reach above average standards. The many strengths in the school are the result of very firmly focused leadership from the headteacher. He has ensured that there has been very good improvement since the inspection in 2000, especially to standards. The school has strong capacity to continue this improvement, and gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the more challenging targets set in English are met fully, especially by higher-attaining pupils.
- As part of this, share these targets consistently with the pupils and give them greater opportunities to self-evaluate their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

In Mathematics and science standards are well above average and progress is good. Standards in English are above average. Higher attaining pupils do not make the same brisk progress in English as they do in the other subjects. This is the key factor in the difference in results across the three main subjects in school. Nonetheless, the school has done a very good job of raising standards since its inspection in 2000.

Children start in the Nursery with above average levels of skills and knowledge and they make good progress which is continued in the Reception Year. By the time they join Year 1, most children have reached the learning targets set for them and many have already started work on the National Curriculum programmes. Good progress is maintained in Years 1 and 2 because teaching is effective. Standards are better than expected by the end of Year 2; the number of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 has improved significantly and is now above average. Generally, pupils in Years 3 to 6 sustain brisk progress. This is most notable in mathematics, where the pupils rise well to meet the demands made of them. Until recently, the targets set in English have not been as challenging. The new English targets should extend pupils much more consistently. Generally, the school successfully uses the assessment results to focus additional support on key groups. This ensures that pupils with learning difficulties

and disabilities make the same good progress as the other pupils. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are successful learners and their rate of progress is good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The overall personal development and well-being of pupils is good. Pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good, whilst their spiritual development is good. The school is an effective example of a multicultural community that works in complete harmony, where respectful relationships between all adults and pupils are widely evident. One pupil, for example, stated with great pride that 'no-one is ever expelled from this school'.

Pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good. They describe the school as 'fantastic' and even 'entertaining'. Good attendance and punctuality are other examples of their eagerness to come to school. Pupils are proud of their School Council and magazine, and talk enthusiastically of their contributions to them. They understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are prepared very well for growing up and contribute to the local community through links with a nearby special school and singing for older residents. They are also involved in collections for charities such as the 'Shoebox' appeal, and for children in Gambia.

The school has a happy, orderly atmosphere, which successfully promotes lively and rewarding learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and is a major improvement on the quality reported in 2000. Children in Nursery and Reception are taught well and they benefit from the wide range of activities provided. A Reception lesson on counting to 20 showed lively and very challenging teaching that enthused the children so much that they were confident to estimate large numbers.

Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2. Here the pace of learning is brisk and lesson planning is thorough. Higher attainers in the mixed Years 1 and 2 class showed much maturity as they worked independently to investigate whether there were more odd or even pairs on a set of dominoes. This task was pitched at the right level for them and was quite different from the work set for the others. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are taught well in all classes, including Years 3 to 6, where the overall quality of teaching and learning is also good.

The benefits of raised expectations, a more careful focus on key skills and an increased pace in mathematics lessons are to be seen in the much improved results in this subject. The teaching of English has been improved well, though there is still work to be done to bring it to the quality found in mathematics. English targets are not reviewed with

the pupils often enough and they have few opportunities to tell the teacher how well they are doing. The comments provided when marking work are not linked strongly enough to individual targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is a rich curriculum in school, including for children in Nursery and Reception. The bright displays show the effective partnerships the school has with people from outside such as staff from other schools. Pupils benefit greatly from the visits they make, including the residential visits and the visitors to school. A Roman soldier in full armour visited Year 4 the day before inspection and fired the pupils' imaginations with his realistic actions and words.

The curriculum continues to improve. At present there is a spotlight on cross-curricular planning and the development of multi-subject topics. The provision of work to meet the separate needs of different attainment groups is good in mathematics, but is not so well developed in English. The school has particularly good provision for information and communication technology (ICT), which helps all pupils learn new skills well. There is a very firm focus on the wealth of cultural diversity in the local community. The Black History Week held in the autumn was clearly an unforgettable experience for the pupils. This, and the partnership with two Somerset schools, contributes much to pupils' very good understanding of different cultures and faiths.

There is a full programme of physical education and sports activities. The School Council told inspectors that one of the most popular sports is girls' tag rugby. One player said her ambition was to 'put the ball down between those two big posts'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care for pupils in the school is a strength. Pupils are educated in a safe and secure environment where they are regularly reminded about respecting each other's safety and the need to be healthy. Pupils are confident that they can always turn to adults in the school who will support and guide them, particularly mentioning the headteacher. Staff are well trained in child protection, and good first aid and health and safety procedures are in place.

Learners are set regular targets for their work, but not all of them are aware of what they are, why they are set or whether they have achieved them. The school has recognised this inconsistency and is already taking action to ensure that all pupils become more aware of how they can improve. There is good guidance for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities which is successful in enabling them to learn well.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good quality of leadership and management in the school has some notable strengths. The shrewd and analytical leadership of the headteacher has led to the development of a highly motivated management team. They share the vision for continual improvement in school, and expect high standards and achievement. In addition, school leaders successfully promote caring and happy learning.

The headteacher, with the support of the very able deputy, has established a rigorous structure for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. This is based upon clearly understood indicators of good teaching, very specific targets for staff development, and the development of an increasingly thorough use of assessment data to monitor pupils' progress. The success of these procedures is shown by improvements in teaching and learning, and standards and progress, especially in mathematics. This includes the development of the role of teaching assistants, who make a substantial contribution to the learning and personal development of pupils, particularly pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those in Nursery and Reception. All staff clearly share the headteacher's view that 'satisfactory' is not good enough for the school. School governors are consistently supportive and they hold senior managers to account, especially for standards. Governors now have a comprehensive knowledge of the strengths, and areas for improvement in the school, which is a distinct improvement since 2000. They have an effective working relationship with subject leaders. Overall, school self-evaluation is good.

The school uses its financial resources prudently and has been especially successful in developing a very good computer suite which is enabling pupils to build skills very successfully. Strong shared leadership, combined with well established aims and good teamwork, give the school great scope for continuing improvement in the future. The school gives good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

The School Council St Bartholomew's Primary School Penn Wolverhampton, WV4 5LG

1 December 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited school earlier this week. We enjoyed talking with you and finding out about your opinions of school. We were impressed with the message that many of you were keen to share: 'We enjoy being here and we are well looked after by the staff. They make our learning fun and we are doing well in our work because of this. We agree with these thoughts, and think that there are other good things in school. •You reach high standards in mathematics and science. •You work hard in lessons and behave very well. •You enjoy the very good range of visits, clubs, sports activities and other events that help you to learn well. •Your school is well led and managed. You respect, trust and like your headteacher, who works very successfully to make school a better place for you.

In the next few months your teachers will be working on one thing in particular that we have identified for improvement. •The work in English is not hard enough for everyone.

We are sure that you will enjoy the changes to come, even though they may mean you find you work in English more difficult. You can help your teachers with the necessary improvements by telling them how well you think you are doing in lessons and whether you are reaching your targets.

Our report will be sent to your homes shortly. Some of you might like to read it. In it we write about the girls' tag rugby team. See if you can find the bit about 'those two big posts'. Good luck in your work.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington Lead inspector