



# Backwell Church of England Junior School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 109183  
**LEA** North Somerset  
**Inspection number** 278150  
**Inspection dates** 15 September 2005 to 16 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Helen Hutchings RISP

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	Church Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Backwell
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11		Bristol BS48 3JJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01275 462632
<b>Number on roll</b>	220	<b>Fax number</b>	01275 462632
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Les Wharram
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 April 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Maria Byrne

<b>Age group</b> 7 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 15 September 2005 - 16 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 278150
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors at the end of the second full week of the academic year.

## **Description of the school**

Backwell Church of England Junior School is a voluntary controlled community school for boys and girls aged 7 to 11. It is about the same size as primary and junior schools nationally with 223 pupils, who come from the village and surrounding area, on roll. Almost all are from white British backgrounds and currently there are no children in the school for whom English is not their first language and who are at an early stage of speaking English. The proportion of pupils who are identified as having special educational needs, including those who hold statements, is higher than the national average. Each year group contains a significant proportion of pupils who did not join the school at the normal time of entry at the beginning of Year 3.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Backwell Church of England Junior School is an outstandingly effective school even better than the school indicated in its self-evaluation. The leadership of the school is well focused on ensuring the best possible educational experiences for pupils. The academic standards achieved are very high because rigorous planning and high quality teaching help pupils to make excellent progress. The school is very successful in meeting its aim to develop confident, independent and responsible young people within a strong Christian ethos. Pupils are very proud of their school and many report the enjoyment of lessons and friendly people as the main reasons for this. The majority of parents are confident about what the school offers. Since the last inspection, when standards were already very good, the school has improved. The attainment of pupils and the rate of improvement are both above the national trends. The school provides outstanding value for money and has the capacity to continue providing a very high quality of education for its pupils.

### What the school should do to improve further

- The school is well placed to improve current levels of achievement even further by implementing the priorities already identified for development in the school development plan. These are the most important:
- develop and expand assessment strategies and the curriculum
- develop further opportunities for pupils to undertake research for themselves
- develop further the leadership and monitoring role of curriculum co-ordinators and focus staff development as much as possible on improving the quality of pupils' learning
- continue to improve school facilities and buildings.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

Children enter the school with attainment that is above the national average. The school builds very successfully on this sound foundation so that standards attained in the tests at the end of Year 6 are significantly higher than those found nationally. Pupils achieve consistently well across the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Year on year, the school is widening the gap between its performance and national performance levels. Pupils make outstanding progress and this is consistent across all groups of pupils. A significant proportion of pupils join the school of later than the normal age of transfer. These pupils too make very high rates of progress, even those who have previously not done so. The amount of value added in this way places the school in the top 10 per cent of schools nationally. Most pupils who had not reached the nationally expected levels of achievement when they entered the school do so by the time they leave school. Pupils are well placed to embark on their secondary education with confidence.

The school rightly attributes some of its success in achieving high standards to the rigour and high expectations it brings to setting challenging targets for pupils and monitoring the progress they make towards these. The school largely meets the challenging targets it sets with the local authority.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are happy at school and enjoy working hard at their learning. They feel safe and their behaviour is excellent. The close links with the Church and the excellent role models provided by all staff form a powerful base from which pupils develop their personal and social skills and learn about right and wrong and good and bad. Attendance is very good.

Spiritual awareness is promoted outstandingly well and permeates through much of the school's work. Visits to and frequent links with the local church, together with the school's daily worship, all increase pupils' awareness of religious concepts such as faith and belief and reinforce values, such as the need for pupils to respect others, to show perseverance in their work and to be thoughtful in their actions. The annual multicultural fortnight and the service for those leaving the school are very much enjoyed by pupils. The sensitivity pupils show to wide-ranging moral issues and especially those that relate to themselves help them become very successful learners who strive to do their best. Pupils have many and varied opportunities to develop their personal and social skills and cultural awareness. The school council is well established and links pupils, staff and governors very well. It has initiated many worthwhile changes and has led fund raising initiatives, for example, to help children in Tanzania and to recover a rain forest in Brazil. These have provided rich and exciting sources for learning about different cultures that are supported well by the regular visits of people from other cultures.

Pupils are regularly encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle and are proud that their school is a 'Healthy School'. They learn about principles of healthy living through events such as science week, through their easy access to water in lessons, as a consequence of 'Brain Gym' activities and through the choices they are offered for lunch.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teaching and learning are outstanding. This is especially so for the youngest and the oldest pupils. In the best lessons, which have the greatest impact on what pupils learn, teaching is characterised by the excellent relationships between staff and pupils. Detailed planning results in all pupils being consistently challenged, irrespective of their needs and capabilities. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Year 3, pupils formed five sub-groups to work on different worksheets that had been specifically prepared

to help them understand that a verb was a 'doing' word. As a result, those who were still experiencing difficulties with their reading learned about the importance of verbs as effectively as the best readers. Pupils are given tasks that interest them. Often pupils work with very high levels of concentration, although in some lessons while still working hard, they do not show the same level of overt enjoyment and sense of achievement. Learning support assistants are used very well and make an important contribution to ensuring that all pupils are fully engaged in lessons.

Teachers have very high expectations for learning. They have a very good knowledge of the subjects they teach and know the capabilities of their children very well. They use this information to plan lessons that are relevant, interesting and sometimes exciting for pupils. Pupils recognize this and respond very well by working hard and giving their best.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The school meets statutory requirements for the curriculum. Very good opportunities are provided to encourage pupils to be healthy and keep fit and to understand how to be safe. Teachers work well together in year teams and as a whole staff to plan a curriculum which builds very successfully on pupils' previous experiences so that learning is pertinent and enjoyable for them. Teachers confidently use national guidance in a way which develops the most relevant areas for the pupils in their classes and adopt only those aspects that will have a positive impact on pupils' progress and attainment. Planning makes very good use of other subjects to teach aspects of literacy and numeracy. The basic curriculum is further enriched by specialist weeks when themes are well managed to give pupils interesting and memorable experiences. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about these 'special weeks'. Such projects are highly successful in helping pupils to be independent in their learning.

Facilities for information and communication technology (ICT) have improved significantly since the last inspection, when it was reported that the existing facilities were not being used very well to support pupils' learning. ICT is now making a very positive contribution to pupils' learning and understanding across a wide range of subjects and this has the potential to improve further when the school gains access to broadband technology.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils is excellent. Child protection requirements and safety procedures are firmly established and understood by all staff. Pupils report that they would quickly go to an adult if they were troubled or if they were being bullied. All staff have been trained in first aid and Year 6 pupils are also given training. Risk assessments are made for all outside visits. The system for tracking pupils' progress against their targets works very well. The inclusion of targets which highlight expected progress encourages pupils to achieve as well as they can. The tracking system is robust enough to identify any pupil who may be

underachieving so that a special programme can be quickly implemented. Procedures for recognising and dealing with pupils who have learning and additional difficulties are very good and meet the requirements of the Code of Practice. Their needs are identified very quickly and the procedures for assessing their capabilities and for tracking their progress are equally good. Teachers and learning support assistants are practised at including all pupils in all the activities of lessons. As a result, the progress made by pupils who have special educational needs is as good as that of others. Those who speed on with their learning are also very well catered for, mostly through additional activities in lessons. Links with parents and outside agencies, especially the Rotary Club, are good and make a very good contribution to pupils' progress. The well-planned and organised induction process means that pupils join the school with little anxiety and they quickly recognise the school's routines and expectations. The link with the secondary school is good and pupils in Year 6 are already confident about the transition at the end of their time at Backwell Junior.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher and members of the leadership group work very closely, with an exceptional shared sense of understanding and purpose that has at its heart the pursuit of the highest possible standards. They have very high expectations for all aspects of school life and are very good role models for others in the school. They receive very good support and guidance from the governing body. This shared understanding spreads through the entire school team. Adults have a very good understanding of the needs of those who have specific and special needs. Any possible discrimination is tackled robustly and programmes are planned for children to understand and deepen their understanding of the effects of their actions on others.

The school's self-evaluation has very accurately identified its strengths and areas it wishes to improve further. This is a real strength of the school, enabling it to maintain and improve its work further. The success of this evaluation is largely due to high expectations and the challenge that staff and governors bring to their thinking. Adults are not afraid to ask and face difficult questions and find solutions to problems identified. The views of pupils and parents are sought to inform the process.

Teaching and learning are monitored rigorously by a range of observers, with the main purpose of allowing teachers to reflect upon and discuss their teaching and its impact on learning. Additionally, this provides the headteacher and governors with an accurate assessment of the quality of work in the school. Performance management and the work towards the 'Investors in People' award are used effectively to identify and plan appropriate professional development.

The school has faced serious budgetary problems in the past but cautious budgeting has enabled the school to build up funds so that it can face future challenges with confidence.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

Backwell Church of England Junior School Church Lane Backwell Bristol BS48 3JJ

19 September 2005

Dear Pupils,

Mr Dobbins and I very much enjoyed meeting you and appreciate the help and friendliness you showed to us during the inspection. This helped us greatly to find out about all the things that happen in your school and we now want to let you know what we thought about it.

We are really pleased that the school does most things very well:

You work very hard. The work you do is excellent and the test results you get are outstanding.

Your teachers expect you to do your best all the time but help you by giving you interesting work in lessons which makes you really think hard about what you know. They mark your work quickly and set targets with you so that you know what to do to improve your work and reach the next level.

Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent and you are very polite and helpful to visitors.

You get excellent help to make you happy and safe in school. You said that you always have someone to go to for help if you have any problems.

Lessons, school worship and special events help you to learn a lot about other people's lives and cultures and how to behave sensitively towards others.

The school has planned some things which we think will help you to do even better:

Your teachers will continue to find new ways of helping you to understand how well you are doing and they will plan more interesting projects for you to study.

The new ICT facilities will help you to find out more things for yourself and help you to be more responsible for what you are learning.

Teachers and governors will try to get the authorities to make plans to improve your buildings so that you have better facilities.

Thank you again for the help you gave us when we visited.

Yours sincerely

Mrs H Hutchings (Lead Inspector)