



# St Bridget's CofE School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 112271  
**LEA** Cumbria  
**Inspection number** 278887  
**Inspection dates** 21 March 2006 to 22 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Lynne Read

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Brigham
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Cockermouth
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		Cumbria CA13 0TU
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01900 325936
<b>Number on roll</b>	126	<b>Fax number</b>	01900 325937
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Richard Robertson
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Helen Munby

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## **Description of the school**

This is a small primary school in Cockermouth, West Cumbria. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage, with a tiny percentage of pupils of mixed heritage. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. When they enter school, children's attainment is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The proportion with a statement of special educational need is above average. A voluntary committee of parents provide an afternoon care facility for three and four year olds and an after-school club for school age children. St Bridget's holds the Cumbrian Healthy School award. At the time of the inspection major building works were in progress to provide much needed classroom, library and hall space.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

St Bridget's provides a satisfactory standard of education with some good features. The school judges its overall effectiveness to be good. The reason for the difference is that its own evaluation is based to a large extent on what it has to offer rather than outcomes, such as pupils' progress. Nevertheless, the school has a clear idea of what needs improving and inspection findings agree with these. Value for money is satisfactory.

There are several features of the school that are good. These include the provision in the Foundation Stage and for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, pupils' personal development, the enrichment of the curriculum and support for children. Standards for pupils entering the school and when they leave are average. Progress is satisfactory overall, and good for children in the Foundation Stage and for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Scope exists to improve progress through setting challenging targets for all pupils. A good model is seen in Year 6 where progress this year is good. Standards of writing are weaker than reading throughout the school and are a focus for development. Teaching is satisfactory overall with examples of good practice. The school makes good use of outside agencies to help pupils learn and good account is taken of pupils' and parents' views when making decisions.

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. Improvements since the previous inspection are satisfactory. The special programmes of work for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities now promote good progress and better assessments of pupils' work provide good information for planning lessons. Procedures to monitor and check the work of the school are improved but subject managers do not do it often enough so weaknesses are sometimes not remedied quickly enough. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop challenging targets for pupils' learning in each year group so expectations of what they are to achieve are higher.
- Extend the monitoring and evaluation work of subject managers so that it happens more often in order to quickly identify and rectify weaknesses.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children enter the nursery with average standards, although some have difficulty with speech and language. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage, especially in personal development. Most are set to reach national expectations by the start of Year 1, many having made up for gaps in their previous learning.

In Years 1 and 2, progress is satisfactory and standards are average at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards, at the end of Key Stage 2, were below average in the 2005 tests as a high percentage of pupils in the group had learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This year, progress in Years 3 to 5 is satisfactory and good in Year 6 where challenging targets are set. Year 6 pupils are on course to attain average standards overall, with a much higher proportion of pupils set to attain the higher Level 5 in science and mathematics. Throughout the school, reading is a strength but standards in writing are too low. Pupils from mixed heritage backgrounds do as well as their classmates, and boys and girls do equally well in lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Their teachers and teaching assistants make very good use of specialist advice, training and equipment to meet their needs fully.

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

### **Grade: 2**

This area is good and a strength of the school. Behaviour is very good and pupils are considerate to others. They cope sensibly and maturely with disruptions caused by the building project. Relationships are very good. Pupils say they feel safe in school, that bullying is not tolerated and that teachers deal swiftly with incidents of 'people not being nice'. They benefit from the school's emphasis on healthy eating and are well informed about the consequences of lifestyle choices. Attendance is above average.

Spiritual, social and moral development is good. Pupils receive praise for good work or actions and interesting, collaborative activities encourage social interaction. Good links with the church and the promotion of environmental awareness help to instil a sense of spirituality in school. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of local and national traditions but are less well informed about the range of different cultures in society.

Pupils contribute to decision making through their school council and have achieved some good improvements, such as improved playground equipment.

They enjoy taking responsibilities around school. They are well prepared for secondary education and life outside school.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with good features. The skilled teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that children have an exciting range of experiences to fire their curiosity and imagination. Teachers and well informed teaching assistants have a good range of expertise to support pupils who find learning difficult. As a result, many of them achieve average standards by the time they leave and those with significant emotional difficulties are helped very effectively to cope with the conventions of school life. In all classes, praise and good relationships inspire pupils to work hard and develop positive attitudes to learning

Pupils' progress is constantly assessed and tracked. Several lessons seen during the inspection were of good quality but evidence of pupils' progress over the years shows satisfactory teaching and learning with good practice in Year 6. This is because Year 6 pupils have challenging targets which promote good progress. In the other years, target setting is less effective. This lowers the expectations of what pupils are expected to achieve.

Marking of pupils' work is satisfactory. In Years 1 and 2, teachers give praise and useful suggestions in lessons to help pupils improve their work. In Years 3 to 6, marking of pupils' books provides helpful guidance for them on how to make improvements to their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall and good in terms of developing pupils' creativity and their personal skills. Art and music have high profiles in the school and pupils are confident learners. Good opportunities to practise the basic skills of reading, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), run through all subject planning but there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length in any subject.

The curriculum for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities meets their needs well. A good range of activities in the Foundation Stage encourages children to ask questions, explore and become independent learners.

Enrichment is good with an interesting range of out of school activities, including opportunities to take part in sports. Good links with the community, a wide range of visitors to the school, and many visits to places of educational interest broaden pupils' experiences.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Overall, this area is satisfactory with strengths in the support for personal development. The pupils' health, safety and protection are seen as of paramount importance. Procedures for risk assessments and child protection are thorough. Staff know children well and provide a useful programme for personal development. Children are confident to approach adults if they experience problems. Parents are appreciative of the fact that their children feel happy within a 'warm and caring environment'.

The school is aware of the need to develop academic guidance for pupils. Learning targets for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are clear and promote good progress. In Year 6, pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve and often review their own progress. For other year groups, pupils' targets are often too general and not adequately based on challenging expectations, especially in writing. Pupils who have gifts and talents are recognised and a programme of activities is being developed satisfactorily.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall and instrumental in maintaining a high standard of care and promoting good personal development. All groups of pupils have equal access to all that the school offers. Staff, effectively led by the headteacher, share a commitment to raising standards further and there is a strong sense of pride in the school.

Through its self-evaluation, the school has a clear idea of what needs to be done and has a detailed plan of action. The role of the subject managers has improved since the previous inspection but requires further development to provide an essential tier of management in this small school. The checking of teaching and learning by subject managers has not developed into a rigorous and continuous cycle of monitoring provision and standards, and setting targets. As a result, problems may go undetected until the term or year end. An example is the planned improvements in writing which have not been fully implemented over the year.

The governors, many of whom are new to the post, understand the strengths of the school and know where further action is needed. They are keen to develop their role in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance and are undertaking training to enable this. At present, their governance is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met.

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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>	3	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	3	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>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	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>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

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23 March 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for the very warm welcome you gave me when I recently visited your school. The conversations that I had with groups and individuals were very mature and interesting and I enjoyed watching you at work.

You said that lots of things were good about your school and I agree. Some of them are:

you enjoy the interesting lessons that your teachers plan for you and work hard

you are doing much better with your learning in science and mathematics and are good readers

you contribute to some very interesting displays of work around school

you behave very well and are polite and friendly

you take good advantage of the wide range of extra activities on offer

your teachers take great care to keep you safe, happy and healthy

you contribute well to the running of the school through the many jobs that you do and help to make decisions through your council members.

I was impressed by the progress made by the Year 6 pupils as they work towards their targets for learning and the way that they reviewed their own progress. I think it would be good for all of you to have this sort of challenge. You are learning all the essential writing skills in your English lessons but do not have enough time to practise them. I have, therefore, asked your teachers to provide more opportunities for writing. There is good learning going on in some lessons. I have asked that teachers make sure this happens in all lessons.

Thank you once again for helping me so much with the inspection. I hope that you will continue to work hard and enjoy the improved space and facilities once your new building is complete.

Yours faithfully

Mrs L Read

Lead inspector