



# Benedict Biscop Church of England Aided Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 108848  
**Local Authority** Sunderland  
**Inspection number** 288206  
**Inspection dates** 21–22 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Tom Grieveson HMI

This inspection of the school 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>	Marcross Drive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Moorside, Sunderland
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		Tyne and Wear, SR3 2RE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5535974
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	242	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 5287378
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Ms Davina Murton
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Paula Thompson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2002		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
3–11	21–22 November 2006	288206

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Benedict Biscop is a Voluntary Aided Church of England Primary School situated in a residential district in the Moorside area of South Sunderland. The buildings date from the 1970's, although recent additions have significantly improved the school buildings and grounds. Most children reside nearby in the Doxford, Ryhope and Silksworth wards but other families choose to travel from further afield because of the school's religious character and its reputation in the area. The proportion of children eligible for free school meals is well below average. Almost all children are White British. Just over one tenth of the children have additional learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Benedict Biscop Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary is a good and improving school, which enjoys the confidence of the large majority of its parents. Senior leaders know where the school's strengths lie and which areas require further improvement. The school's own evaluation is accurate. Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, ably supported by the leadership team and staff, has successfully maintained a secure focus on raising standards. Consequently, standards have remained high and by the end of Key Stage 2 the large majority of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make good progress and achieve well. The school has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection.

Targeted actions to bring about improvements have been mainly successful, particularly those related to teachers' lesson planning and the tracking of pupils' progress. Teaching and learning are good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 because teachers use assessment information successfully to plan lessons and provide pupils with relevant and challenging activities. This generates pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning and the majority thrive and do well. Teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. While most pupils make adequate progress, assessment information is not used well enough by teachers when planning lessons. Their expectations of what more able pupils in particular can achieve are not high enough and too many of these pupils do not make the progress which they should. Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy a positive start to their education and make good progress. Most do well, with the majority achieving the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils' personal development is particularly well catered for because they are helped to feel secure and confident by those who care for them.

Most pupils, throughout the school, demonstrate exemplary attitudes towards their work. Their behaviour and the way they cooperate with other pupils in lessons is very good. Relationships are extremely positive and reflect the school's Christian values shown in particular by the high degree of respect shown to all members of the school community and the celebration of their achievements. Most pupils willingly accept responsibility and take great pride in their work. The majority of staff provide high quality guidance and support and pupils respond well to the advice which they receive and this helps them to improve. The school provides excellent care for pupils. Safety procedures are robust and rigorously adhered to. Pupils are confident, and know they are safe. This provides them with a secure basis from which to learn. The school provides good value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Make sure that all teachers use the school's assessment information when planning lessons to ensure that tasks meet the learning needs of all pupils.
- Ensure that more able pupils at Key Stage 1 achieve in line with their capabilities.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the Foundation Stage with broadly average skills and knowledge. Teachers provide activities and experiences which are well matched to pupils' learning needs. This helps them to make good progress in all areas of learning. Pupils' personal and social skills are particularly well developed. By the time pupils enter Year 1, most have successfully achieved and some have exceeded the early learning goals. At Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress but more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should. At Key Stage 2, most pupils make good and sometimes rapid progress towards their targets and achieve high standards. Effective use of assessment information ensures that tasks are well matched to pupils' capabilities. Lessons are challenging. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because staff use their thorough and detailed understanding of pupils' learning needs to ensure that support is well targeted and effective.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development of pupils, including their moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance is excellent, reflecting pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment of school. Behaviour is good. In lessons where teachers' expectations are at their highest, behaviour is exemplary. Pupils say there is no bullying and, through the work of the school council, have been active in helping the school to develop robust and clear policy in this area. The majority of parents compliment the school on the successful resolution of behavioural issues although concerns about bullying are expressed by a small minority. Pupils appreciate what the school does to ensure that they are safe and respond well to those opportunities which the school provides to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Pupils relish the many excellent opportunities which enable them to make a contribution to school life and to the community. This is exemplified by the mature work of the school council and the numerous commendations which the school receives from groups and organisations. Independence and initiative taking is encouraged and evident in the business skills displayed by those pupils managing the healthy tuck shop. Pupils' maturity and self-confidence is greatly enhanced by their outstanding spiritual development, a feature of the school's strong Christian ethos. Overall, pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of education and for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good, and occasionally outstanding, in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. Both are satisfactory at Key Stage 1.

In the Nursery and Reception classes, pupils' learning needs are well catered for. Sensitive interaction with staff helps pupils become confident in their surroundings. Good lesson planning takes full account of children's abilities and provides the basis for the very good experiences provided. The appropriate mix of activities chosen by children, including their independent use of the new interactive whiteboards, and those led by staff contributes directly to the good progress which pupils make.

The majority of pupils, throughout the school, are keen and eager to learn. Most enjoy their learning. They demonstrate very positive attitudes and apply themselves well. The majority take responsibility for completing work by showing sustained concentration throughout lessons and by working very effectively with each other.

At Key Stage 1, teachers do not take sufficient account of the needs of all pupils when preparing lessons. Their expectations of the most able are not high enough and tasks provided in lessons are not sufficiently challenging for them. Too many more able pupils do not make the progress which they should. At Key Stage 2, assessment and target-setting information is used effectively by teachers when lessons are planned. Tasks are challenging and successfully meet the respective needs of all pupils and they do well. Teachers use their good subject knowledge and an effective use of questioning to engage children and maintain their interest.

Teaching assistants make an important contribution to pupils' learning throughout the school because of the well targeted and effective support that they provide. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are particularly well supported and make good progress.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and takes full account of the learning needs of pupils. The school has successfully changed the way it plans for and organises the curriculum. Whilst an appropriate emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy, links between subjects are secure and pupils have good opportunities to develop their basic skills in other curriculum areas. An extensive range of additional activities, which includes various sporting opportunities, educational visits and a residential week in the Lake District, enrich the curriculum and significantly promote pupils' enjoyment of school. The pupils have good opportunities to learn and practise information and communication technology (ICT) skills effectively in the well resourced computer suite. The school has invested substantially in new technology by placing interactive whiteboards in most classrooms. All teachers have access to them and the majority of staff use these well in lessons to support pupils' learning. Outdoor learning has been enriched through the installation of new play equipment in the yard and Foundation Stage areas and through good opportunities afforded to pupils during break times.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support that pupils receive is good. Safeguarding procedures are very robust. Child protection arrangements are up-to-date and rigorous. Risk assessment is diligent. Particular vigilance is shown in promoting high levels of attendance. Staff know pupils and their families well. Most parents express their confidence in the personal and social care provided. The school endeavours to make sure all pupils are well cared for. Good whole-school strategies are effective in monitoring pupils' progress. Information is readily accessible to staff and is used well by most to identify pupils requiring additional help. Not enough use is made of this information at Key Stage 1, however, when planning lessons. The marking of pupils' work is often good. In such cases, teachers provide information which helps pupils to understand how to improve to meet their targets. However, this practice is inconsistent as too often teachers restrict their comments to praising pupils' efforts and do not provide them with sufficient information about how to improve.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and senior leadership team provide clear and decisive leadership focused on raising standards. Rigorous monitoring procedures provide the school with an accurate understanding of its strengths and where it must improve. School improvement planning is well targeted on those areas requiring most improvement. The school has undergone significant staffing changes since the previous inspection and these have been managed well. New staff receive good training, helpful guidance and effective support. However, intervention at Key Stage 1 to improve pupils' achievement has met with limited success.

Governors actively monitor the performance of the school and have a clear understanding of its performance. They are fully involved in monitoring through their links to specific subject areas. Governors receive accurate information from the school from which to make key decisions. Financial management is effective and spending decisions reflect school improvement priorities well.

Recent refurbishments and the excellent maintenance of the buildings and grounds contribute significantly to the high quality of the learning environment.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	1
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Benedict Biscop Church of England Aided Primary School

Marcross Drive

Moorside

Sunderland

Tyne and Wear

SR3 2RE

21 November 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for the welcome you gave Mrs Ling, Mr Cooper and myself when we inspected your school on 21 and 22 November 2006. The report has now been completed and I would like to tell you what it contains.

Benedict Biscop Church of England Aided Primary School is a good school, which is doing a great deal to make sure you all do well. Mrs Thompson, the staff and governors work very hard and do a really good job in helping you to learn.

You provided us with lots of information about your school and told us how much you enjoy your learning, being with your friends and taking part in all the many activities which the school provides. It is good to know that you feel safe and like coming to school and we can see why. Your attendance is excellent. We were very impressed by the way you answered our questions. The school council take their job very seriously and have done much to improve the school. They deserve great credit for what they have achieved. The healthy fruit snack shop is a great idea. Well done.

Your behaviour during the inspection was very good. Your hard work and the way you work together shows how responsible you are.

I would be grateful if you would thank your parents for all the very useful information which they provided. They clearly like your school and the large majority consider that it is doing well. They are right to think so.

I have asked Mrs Thompson, the staff and governors to concentrate on making two things even better. Perhaps you can think of ways to help them.

- To make sure that the most able pupils in Key Stage 1 make better progress.
- Your teachers know you all very well. We want them to use their knowledge to always provide you with activities which help you learn the best that you can.

Thank you again for making our visit to Benedict Biscop so enjoyable. Please accept my very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Tom Grieveson

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools