



St Julian's CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109210
Local Authority Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number 288311
Inspection date 14 February 2007
Reporting inspector Martin Cole

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wellow
School category	Voluntary controlled		Bath
Age range of pupils	4-11		BA2 8QS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01225 833143
Number on roll (school)	95	Fax number	01225 835914
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Tim Wheeler
		Headteacher	Sue East
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2005		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This small rural school educates pupils from homes with very varied social and economic circumstances. Children's levels of attainment on starting school are also very varied. The overall profile of ability of new pupils fluctuates significantly from year to year but is generally broadly average. Almost all pupils are White British. Although relatively few pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities, the proportion who experience severe difficulty or disability is higher than normally found.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. It has improved a great deal since its previous inspection.

Amongst many improved aspects of the school are the personal development and well-being of pupils which are now outstanding. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent. Self-motivation is the basis of their enthusiastic learning and their very constructive involvement in school and community life. Pupils show exceptional qualities of independence, initiative, responsibility and self-confidence. These are preparing them extremely well for further learning and for meeting the demands of adult and working life in the future. These qualities are the result of the school's distinctive and consistent approach to teaching and managing pupils. Pupils are challenged and encouraged to think carefully for themselves and to try out their own ideas within a framework of staff's sensitive guidance and of respectful relationships. The care, guidance and support of pupils are excellent.

Pupils' enthusiasm and responsible attitudes are helping almost all of them to make good progress and achieve well in their work. With small numbers of pupils, standards vary from year to year reflecting different profiles of pupils' abilities. The standards of pupils leaving the school last year were broadly average. In relation to their earlier attainment, this represented good achievement. Young children at the Foundation Stage benefit from good provision and also achieve well.

Good teaching and a good curriculum are also keys to pupils' good achievement. In addition to teachers' marked success in promoting pupils' willingness to learn, they generally provide well for the challenging wide range of pupils' abilities and needs. The help given to pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is especially good, but in occasional lessons the teaching does not fully challenge a very small number of pupils of the highest ability and thus limits their progress. The curriculum provides well for pupils to acquire basic skills and encourages them to apply them fully across the range of their school work. Many special events, activities, visits and community links enrich the curriculum. Limited accommodation hinders some aspects of the curriculum, especially physical education.

The school's many strengths reflect the good leadership and management. This has been transformed since the previous inspection in January 2005 when there was a serious weakness in the headteacher's leadership and management. Under a different headteacher, appointed in September 2005, the school has made very good improvement. Consequently the school's previous designation as having serious weaknesses no longer applies. The headteacher's very clear vision and determination and the hard work of a strong team of staff have improved the quality of education significantly, although many changes are too new to have yet proved themselves fully in raised standards. The record of recent improvement and the school's clear understanding of how it can move still further forward give it an excellent capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure pupils of high ability are always fully challenged by their tasks.
- Take all possible steps to improve the accommodation.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils are achieving well. They make good progress in relation to their earlier attainment. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress toward the individual targets set for them. With small numbers of pupils and a very varied intake, the standards pupils attain fluctuate considerably from year to year. Over recent years the oldest pupils' standards have been broadly average. However, the Year 6 national test results in 2006 and the work and progress of the present Year 6 pupils suggest an improving trend. This view is also supported by the fact that the pupils who left the school in 2006 had made above average progress since they took the Year 2 tests four years earlier. Although satisfactory, the progress, mainly in mathematics, of a very small number of pupils with especially high ability is not as good as that of others.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school has a very strong sense of the values and personal attributes it aims to develop in pupils and is highly successful in achieving its aim. Its approach is consistent through every aspect of school life. Children get off to a flying start at the Foundation Stage in becoming confident and independent learners. Both here and in later years pupils find great interest and much enjoyment at school. They feel very happy, safe and successful. They understand well how to be healthy both in the physical and in the social and emotional senses. Pupils are keen to take physical exercise but the limited accommodation restricts the range of choices they can make.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is excellent. Pupils are very reflective about themselves, their behaviour and relationships. They respond very well to the many invitations within the life of the school to show enterprise and take responsibility. Pupils join keenly in discussion and action designed to enrich the life of both the school and the wider community, with which there are many substantial links. Pupils achieve a very good appreciation of cultural diversity; a productive partnership with an African school making a valuable contribution here.

The essential strength of pupils' outstanding personal qualities is that the motivation for their keen learning and excellent behaviour comes from within. This is providing an ideal basis for their present and future learning and is preparing them exceptionally well to become confident, competent and constructive members of society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There is good teaching throughout the school. Teachers make very effective use of a wide range of methods and resources to interest and involve pupils. Pupils respond to the stimulating lessons as active, self-motivated learners. Almost all speak up very confidently, thoughtfully and often imaginatively in class. When necessary, the teacher directs learning very systematically and intensively, as in the teaching of letter sounds to younger children. At other times pupils are very effectively challenged to think for themselves, pose their own questions, choose their own methods of 'finding out' and organize their own learning. Carefully planned lessons generally cater well for the wide range of pupils' abilities and needs. Occasionally, though, a small number of pupils of high ability are not fully challenged by their tasks and make less progress than they might. New systems for keeping a close check on pupils' progress are used to identify well the help pupils need to take their next steps in learning. Teachers and teaching assistants give very thorough extra help to pupils finding difficulty in learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good Foundation Stage curriculum gets pupils' education off to a very successful start. A strength of the curriculum both here and in later years is the blend of structured and creative elements. Throughout the school, work on the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is well structured and is supported by well designed links with work in other subjects. On the other hand, activities within the school's 'creative enquiry' programme give pupils excellent opportunities to develop the skills of thinking and learning independently. The curriculum provides well for pupils' personal as well as academic skills. Programmes of work generally suit pupils' wide-ranging abilities and needs. This is especially true for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities but not always the case for the very few pupils of high ability. There is good enrichment of the curriculum through well chosen educational visits, special events, community activities and a range of optional activities outside lessons, such as in drama and sport. Although there have been recent minor improvements, the school's limited accommodation, indoors and outdoors, hinders physical education and there are few spaces apart from classrooms where pupils can be taught or can work on their own.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The excellent quality of care, support and guidance given to pupils is very apparent in the feelings of safety, confidence and enjoyment pupils express and demonstrate. The very caring ethos of the school is matched by very rigorous procedures for safeguarding pupils and keeping a close check on their welfare. Pupils are very

confident about asking for and receiving effective adult help. The guidance teachers give pupils on their learning is good. Pupils know how well they are progressing and exactly what they must do to make further progress. They have clear and relevant personal targets which they know and understand well. Teachers mark pupils' work very helpfully, explaining clearly to them how they can improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has a very clear picture of how the school should be and has received the full support of her staff in a very successful drive to realise the vision. Staff have become much more effective in leading and managing their own areas of responsibility within the school. Great strides have been taken to further enhance the ethos of the school and to improve the teaching and the curriculum. Standards have begun to rise although it is too soon for the improvements in teaching to have fully proved their worth. The school is clearly committed to equality of opportunity and has recognised this can be extended by improving support for its most able pupils. Careful checks have helped the school to know clearly and accurately its strengths and how it can be still better. Governors help to see that the school meets all legal requirements, are watchful of the school's performance and contribute well to planning for improvement. The commitment to, and capacity for, raising standards as recent developments become further embedded is very clear.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
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	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
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

The inspectors who visited your school recently would like to thank all of you for your very friendly welcome. We really enjoyed meeting and talking to you.

We have said that yours is a good school and some things about it are really excellent. It was very good to see how very much you enjoy school and how very well you get on with each other and with the adults. We think your behaviour is excellent and that you have a very sensible attitude to school and to your work. This is helping you make good progress. We were also very impressed by the many ways that you help to look after the school and the community.

Some of you told us how much help the teachers and the others adults give you. We saw this for ourselves. All the adults look after you really well. The teachers give you good lessons and provide good work that helps you learn. They also organise plenty of interesting visits and activities. We thought the link you have with the school in Africa is a very good idea.

The adults in charge of the school are doing a good job. They have helped the school improve a lot. However, we have suggested two ways that the school could help you learn still more successfully:

- by making sure the work is always sufficiently hard for every one of you, so that you all make the best progress you can
- by trying to improve the accommodation, particularly so that you have better opportunities for physical exercise.

We wish you all the best for the future.