

# Barwell Church of England Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120113
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	291632
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Eadie

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	233
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Charles Broadhurst
<b>Headteacher</b>	Brenda Davies
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 November 2002
<b>School address</b>	High Street Barwell Leicester LE9 8DS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01455 842047
<b>Fax number</b>	01455 442294

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average sized school draws its pupils from the village, which has some areas of social and economic disadvantage. Numbers of children in the locality are declining and the school has therefore had to reduce the number of classes.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Parents are very positive about the school and say such things as, 'Our child has been enthused by good teaching in many subjects and has developed into a well-rounded, considerate person'. This is not surprising as this is a good school with some outstanding features. Perhaps the most striking of these is pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils have numerous opportunities for spiritual development and cultivate a real care and concern for the feelings and needs of others. This extends to their awareness and appreciation of their own and other cultures, which is excellent.

Levels of pastoral care are outstanding. All pupils are very well known by staff and their individual needs are always at the top of the agenda. This ensures that the school is a happy and secure place where pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and feel extremely safe. Academic guidance is good and targets are set for pupils. However, in most classes these are not sufficiently short term or specific to enable pupils to know what they need to learn next. Care, guidance and support are therefore good overall. This good guidance and support leads to pupils' good personal development and well-being. Pupils are developing into caring, responsible young people who have a good appreciation of their responsibilities in society.

Pupils achieve well through the school and reach above average standards by the time they leave. The reason for pupils' good progress is good teaching. Teachers make particularly good use of brief discussions and question and answer sessions to get pupils thinking, and the pupils learn quickly when these techniques are used. Comments such as, 'Wow, that's really cool!' when seeing a mathematical sequence demonstrated visually on an interactive whiteboard are typical of the enthusiasm that is engendered in lessons. Although the school has a good marking policy, this is not followed consistently to help pupils to improve their work.

Another reason for pupils' good progress is the outstanding curriculum. Pupils are interested and enthused by the very wide range of learning opportunities that it provides. As a parent typically said, 'The range of topics and the depth is incredible – I am learning a lot from my child'. Pupils have had an input into the development of the curriculum; their views on the creative curriculum being taken before adapting this to meet their needs. At the last inspection, provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was inadequate. It is a further indication of the improvements that the school is making that this provision is now good and these pupils make good progress.

The major reason for the success of the school is its good leadership and management. For example, the reduction in the number of classes was very sensitively managed. Leadership is strong at all levels and all staff play a considerable role in the management of the school. This is most noted in the extremely thorough monitoring that is carried out. This involves all staff and governors in a wide range of activities, including interviewing pupils for their views about how provision and their learning can be improved. All of this ensures that there is an extremely accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. This has led to a trend of significantly improving standards over the last four years, which indicates that the school is exceptionally well placed to continue on its upward path.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Set clear short-term targets for pupils so that they know what they need to learn next.

- Ensure that the marking policy is used consistently, so that pupils know how to improve their work.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils achieve well. They join the school having reached average standards in the national tests at the infant school and make good progress to reach above average standards by the time they leave. The rising trend in standards of recent years is on track to continue, with the school expecting to meet the very challenging targets it has set itself for the 2007 tests. Pupils' progress is particularly good in science, where standards are higher than in English and mathematics. In the past, girls did not do as well as boys in mathematics, largely because boys join the school with much higher levels in this subject. This has been addressed well and girls are now reaching the same standards as boys.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because their needs are identified early and they are set very specific targets to help them improve. Pupils with particular gifts and talents also make good progress as they are given really challenging work. Standards in some of the creative subjects and in personal, social and health education are particularly good because of the high priority that is placed on these subjects.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The school ethos results in outstanding spiritual development. For example, pupils openly describe their emotional reaction to music. Their excellent cultural development is clear in their enjoyment of Indian dance and their involvement in regular performances, such as the play at the time of the inspection. They show good care towards others, for example those who are new to the school. Their contribution to the community and to the world around them is good, with substantial charitable giving ranging from whole-school events to individual efforts. Older pupils take responsibility for aspects of the school, such as arranging displays and managing the library. All pupils know about the activities of the school council which, chaired by a teacher, plays an active part in representing pupils' views.

The overwhelming majority of pupils enjoy lessons very much, showing their appreciation both in their response and in the questionnaires that they complete. Almost all behave very well. There are a few pupils who behave badly and are, therefore, temporarily excluded. The effectiveness of this action shows in the lack of repeat exclusions. As a result of the thorough programme of personal, social and health education, coupled with science and food technology, pupils know about a healthy lifestyle, but this has not had a great impact on the contents of packed lunches. Good opportunities for independent decision-making, coupled with good development of basic skills, prepare pupils well for their future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Teachers give good attention to the needs of individuals, catering very well for pupils' specific learning needs through close monitoring and planning. Teaching assistants work effectively with individuals and groups so that all can

learn equally well. Teachers plan well to provide specific challenge for gifted and talented pupils which extends their learning well. Pupils find lessons interesting as they are given a good variety of experiences, know that their contributions are valued in whole-class discussion and have many chances to make their own decisions. Teachers make learning objectives clear by discussing their meaning. Sometimes, however, there is too little time left to revisit these objectives at the end of lessons so that pupils can evaluate the success of their learning. Although marking is positive and encouraging, the school's marking policy is not followed consistently and pupils are not shown clearly how they can improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

There is an extremely broad range of opportunities for pupils to think, to make connections and to find out about the wider world. All pupils are well served by clear consideration of individual needs, with each pupil's personal strengths recognised and developed. A very well designed and highly popular creative curriculum broadens perspectives in a range of subjects, giving pupils chances to make independent decisions. The school liaises well with local organisations, especially the church, other schools and sporting organisations, to link pupils to their community, while providing experiences such as residential courses to widen experience. Pupils have begun to learn French and the school has good plans to develop this so that all pupils can gain from the experience. The programme for personal, social and health education is a strength of the school and is the major reason for pupils' good personal development. There is a wide range of activities after school, including sports and performance arts, with visits and visitors enriching pupils' experiences very well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Outstanding care for pupils' pastoral needs is provided by all adults in the school. Arrangements to keep pupils safe are very thorough. Pupils are well supported when they start at the school, and the transfer to new classes each year is sensitively managed. There are good procedures to help pupils cope with the move to secondary school. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have good care and support, with teachers giving very careful attention to their individual needs. Staff encourage all pupils to succeed through praise, although guidance to help them improve academically is inconsistent. Although targets are set in literacy and numeracy, they are too long term and lack precision, so pupils are unclear about their next steps in learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

One of the key elements of the success of the school is the devolved nature of leadership. All staff are given high levels of responsibility for standards in their subjects. They carry out very thorough monitoring, and good plans are put in place to address weaknesses found. Staff development is exemplary, as confirmed in a recent Investor in People review. Plans for development are good and the school aims for sustainability rather than going for a 'quick fix'. Steady and consistent improvement is therefore being made, particularly in pupils' progress, although leaders recognise that there is still work to be done.

Governors offer good levels of expertise and are fully involved in monitoring and self-evaluation. They therefore have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. A particularly good feature of governance is the termly presentations that governors request from subject leaders. This further develops teachers' accountability and gives governors a clear understanding of the needs of the school.

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## Annex A

## 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>
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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 effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
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	2
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	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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	2
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>	1
<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.

## Annex A

**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	1
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

6 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Barwell Church of England Junior School, Barwell, Leicester, LE9 8DS

Thank you so much for welcoming Mrs Randall and I to your school this week. We really enjoyed our time with you and hearing how much you enjoy everything that your school has to offer. Many of you told us how good your school is. We agree and think it is a good school with some things that are outstanding.

We think these are the best things about your school:

- Your school has planned an extremely wide range of interesting and fun things for you to learn.
- You are developing very well into responsible young people. Particularly impressive was the way that you understand the feelings of others and care for each other.
- You are making good progress and reaching above average standards by the time you leave. This is because teaching is good.
- Your headteacher and teachers are particularly good at checking on how well you are doing and they make good plans to help you to make even faster progress.
- All adults take exceptionally good care of you and they are beginning to give you good guidance on how to make your work better.

These are the things we have asked your headteacher and teachers to improve:

- Although you are set targets, these are not changed regularly enough and they do not tell you exactly what you need to learn next.
- When teachers mark your work, they do not always use the good marking scheme that is displayed in all your classes, so you are not always told how you can improve your work.

You can help too by making sure you know your targets and working hard to achieve them. I am sure you will do everything you can to help the headteacher and teachers make your school even better. Keep up the good work!

Yours faithfully

John D Eadie Lead Inspector