



# St Barnabas CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 120187  
**Local Authority** Leicester City  
**Inspection number** 291661  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Paul Edwards

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	St Barnabas Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Leicester
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		LE5 4BD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2767612
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	301	<b>Fax number</b>	0116 2460124
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Alan Bowles
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Susan Poole
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 April 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 3–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 6–7 March 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 291661
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Barnabas is a large primary school serving a disadvantaged area of Leicester. Almost a quarter of the pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is above the national average. Most pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds and a small minority are at an early stage of learning English. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils enters or leaves the school part-way through the academic year. Children start school in the Nursery with skill and ability levels which are much lower than those seen nationally.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Barnabas provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The school is successful in its efforts to ensure that pupils enjoy their time at the school whilst providing them with stimulating and challenging activities. Parents and pupils attest to the school's success in achieving this aim.

Children are provided with a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes and it is here where their enjoyment of school begins. Children are provided with many interesting activities that are well matched to their age and maturity. A very good emphasis is placed on developing their communication and language skills, which are particularly low when they enter the school. When taking account of their starting points, pupils achieve well throughout the school. Standards are slightly below average overall by the end of Year 6. In English, where there has been a good improvement in standards over the last four years, they are close to the national average. Although improving in mathematics, standards are below average and not improving at the same rate as in English. The school rightly recognises that a few more-able pupils are not being challenged to do as well as they should. Teaching is consistently good throughout the school. Whilst teachers generally make good use of assessment information to plan work, there are occasions when it is not used well enough to ensure a few of the more-able pupils are challenged sufficiently in mathematics.

Pupils' personal and social development is good. They behave exceptionally well and thoroughly enjoy all aspects of school. Pupils are enthusiastic about the good curriculum provided by the school. There is a good emphasis on music, with many pupils learning to play a brass instrument. The school makes up for its lack of green space by making good use of nearby facilities to provide pupils with a good range of physical activities. This helps to support the pupils' efforts to keep fit, and most demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of eating healthily. Pupils are happy in school because of the good care, support and guidance they receive and the way in which all staff support them, both in and out of lessons. There is a good emphasis on celebrating the different cultures and backgrounds in the school and pupils' confidence develops very well from the Nursery class onwards.

Leadership and management are good. Changes to staffing have allowed a restructuring of the senior management team. Whilst new, its impact is evident in terms of a much sharper awareness of standards and pupils' progress. There is a good awareness of how it can make further improvements to the quality of education. There is now a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and on raising standards. The improved use of information to track pupils' progress is ensuring the best use is made of staffing resources to target areas of underachievement. However, the tracking information needs refining to enable it to be more easily interrogated so that it can react more quickly to early signs of any underachievement.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Help more pupils to reach the higher levels in mathematics so that standards match those achieved by pupils in English.
- Ensure teachers make more effective use of assessment information to challenge the most able pupils.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery with skill levels that are much lower than those seen nationally. Throughout the Foundation Stage they make good progress, although few attain the standards expected for their age when they enter Year 1. Considerable emphasis is placed on developing the children's basic skills, and the experienced staff ensure that speaking skills develop well, providing children with the confidence to engage in conversation and discussion. Progress is good throughout the rest of the school, although it is better in English than mathematics as the result of intensive intervention programmes and the high level of effective support for those pupils learning English as an additional language. Pupils with learning difficulties also make good progress because support is well focused and addresses their most significant needs. There has been a good improvement in National Curriculum test results in English at the end of Year 6. Standards in the current Year 6 show further improvement and are close to what might be expected for pupils of their age. Standards in mathematics are also improving but the school recognises the need to ensure the most able pupils are challenged more consistently throughout the school.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils are polite and caring and really enjoy school. One said, 'Our school is a happy place, I love coming to school.' Pupils' good and greatly improved attendance shows how much they enjoy school life. Relationships are very good and pupils support and help each other, for instance, as buddies to those who are lonely at breaktimes. Pupils raise money to help those less fortunate than themselves, for example, through a harvest festival collection for the charity 'Seeds for Africa'. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because all aspects are promoted daily. This is reflected in pupils' outstanding behaviour and excellent racial harmony throughout the school. Pupils coming from other countries rapidly settle and become part of the community. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the school and wider community, and take responsibility seriously, for example the 'zoneparc' workers who check that games are being played correctly at lunchtimes. The school council has a role in formulating school rules and making improvements. Pupils feel that they are listened to and that their suggestions are followed up. They have a good awareness of safety, such as walking sensibly on staircases, and feel safe in school. Pupils are developing a healthy lifestyle and, through their school council, even chose to change the names of their 'team point groups' to watermelon, mango, pineapple, and coconuts!

They enjoy organised sporting activities and join in enthusiastically in the many after-school clubs. Their good social skills and their increasing competence in communication, literacy and numeracy prepare them well for future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The pupils' views that teachers make lessons fun were evident during the inspection. Pupils learn effectively because teachers make the lessons interesting. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils are encouraged to show initiative and a positive approach to their work. Good questioning provides opportunities to challenge the pupils' thinking and to encourage them to answer in complete sentences. They respond to questions enthusiastically and have established relationships with their teachers that are mature and respectful. Humour is injected into the lessons without any fear that silliness will result. In some lessons the pace of learning drops because explanations take too long. Teachers manage their classes well. They gain the attention of their pupils and use the very good relationships they establish to motivate them to work conscientiously. Teaching assistants are well trained and deployed and provide good support for the pupils. Teachers generally use assessment information well to plan work but this is not always the case when planning for a few more-able pupils in mathematics.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum provided by the school is well matched to pupils' needs. Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a rich and stimulating curriculum, with a good emphasis on developing their early communication and language skills. Their personal and social skills are also promoted well and this is a strength of the curriculum for pupils throughout the school. There is a good number and range of enrichment activities which add significantly to the pupils' enjoyment of school.

Education for promoting the pupils' physical well-being is good. There is a good emphasis on the promotion of physical activities and the school does well to compensate for its limited outdoor space by making use of facilities within the community. Links with outside providers, such as the Leicester Tigers Rugby Club, help enhance the school's provision. The curriculum provides good guidance for pupils on how to stay healthy and how to keep safe. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is enhanced through acts of collective worship and the school's religious education programme. The school is beginning to make more effective use of themed approaches to the curriculum to enable pupils to use literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects, although it recognises the need for more such opportunities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is popular with both parents and pupils because the pastoral care is very good. Pupils who enter the school part-way through the school year are provided with good support, enabling them to settle well. Those pupils at an early stage of learning English are helped to take a full part in all aspects of the curriculum through the provision of a good level of bi-lingual support. The school has introduced a wide range of strategies to ensure pupils with learning difficulties can make progress in line with their classmates. An effective combination of individual and small-group work and support in class is helping to ensure they achieve their potential. The school tracks and monitors pupils' academic work carefully and there are examples of good feedback to pupils explaining how well they have done and how they might improve further. However, this system of feedback is not yet embedded and the school recognises the need to ensure that all teachers adopt a consistent approach when marking pupils' work.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

There has been a clear drive to raise standards and the good lead provided by the headteacher, who is well supported by senior staff, is ensuring that the progress already seen gathers pace. The drive to improve boys' writing, for example, has helped to raise standards, and lessons learned from initiatives with older pupils are being effectively applied throughout the school. Regular monitoring of the quality of teaching and a strong commitment to continual improvement ensure the school provides a good quality of education. The school's self-evaluation is accurate, although it has underestimated the impact of improvements made, and it is well placed to make further improvements. The tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress is improving and identifies how well pupils are achieving. However, although the information is held on computer, it is not easy to identify trends and to draw together different pieces of information from the way in which it is presented. Parents' and pupils' views are continually sought and are taken into consideration when planning new initiatives. Governors provide good support and are regular visitors to the school.

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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	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

<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	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	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>	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**

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. St Barnabas is providing you with a good education.

These are some of the highlights of your school.

- From the time that you start school, you make good progress and reach average standards. Your work in English is getting better.
- Those of you who need extra help and guidance are provided with good support.
- You behave exceptionally well, try to do your best and enjoy your work because you are given lots of interesting things to do.
- Your learning is good because you are taught well. You get on well with your teachers and other children in lessons and around the school.
- You are developing a good understanding of how to keep healthy.
- The way in which adults look after you and keep you safe.
- Your school runs smoothly and everyone works hard to help you learn as well as you can.

These are the things we have asked the school to do now.

- Improve how well you do in mathematics.
- Encourage teachers to make better use of information from tests to help those of you who find work a little easy in mathematics to do better.

I hope you continue to work hard and enjoy your time at school.