



# St Botolph's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 118856  
**Local Authority** Kent  
**Inspection number** 298256  
**Inspection dates** 7–8 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Kathryn Taylor

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>	Dover Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Northfleet
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Gravesend DA11 9PL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01474 365737
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	219	<b>Fax number</b>	01474 564436
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Anthony Smith
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Hyne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 March 2001		

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<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7–8 March 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 298256
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is of average size. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Twenty per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds, but almost all pupils are fluent English speakers. Attainment on entry to school is broadly average. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities and with statements of special educational need is broadly average. Free school meals uptake is below average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Botolph's is a good school with a welcoming, family ethos. Staff ensure that pupils enjoy school and develop maturity. Provision in the Foundation Stage, (Reception class), has improved since the last inspection, and is now satisfactory. Children enjoy an appropriate mix of adult-led and independent activities indoors and outside. Induction into school is good and enables children to settle in quickly and make steady progress across each of the areas of learning. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is good. There are particular strengths in provision for teaching the basic skills, music and physical education. A good range of after-school activities, visits and visitors enriches pupils' experiences and their enjoyment of school.

Standards and achievement are good. Standards are above average at seven, and well above average by the time pupils leave at 11. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science because teaching and learning are good. Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils' high standards of behaviour, and their very good attitudes to school and learning, contribute well to their achievements, and to ensuring that the school is a very harmonious community. Pupils' very good basic skills and social skills mean they are extremely well prepared for secondary school.

Care, guidance and support are good. Pastoral care is very good and academic guidance for pupils is generally good. However, since the co-ordinator for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities left at the end of last term, the process of reviewing pupil progress and setting new targets for these pupils has been delayed. The provision for these pupils is currently not being monitored effectively, and some pupils are not receiving enough support. Parents make a very good contribution to their children's education. Their views of the school are largely positive. A few parents would like to see improvement in specific areas, such as the provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. They would like increased opportunities to express their views about the school and to get involved in it.

Leadership and management are good. This is evident in their impact on improving standards, developing staff, and enabling pupils to make good personal and academic progress. Senior leaders have a secure overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses and subject leaders develop work in their subjects well. However, there is a lack of rigour in the way the school monitors and evaluates its work. As a result, senior leaders do not have a precise picture of exactly how and where further improvements to standards might be made. School development planning lacks precision. Consequently, at the current time, despite the strong commitment to continued improvement and to raising standards further, the school's capacity for improvement is only satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities receive the appropriate level of support and that their progress is reviewed regularly.

- Develop more rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's provision, linking this to improved school development planning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 improved in 2006 and were above average. Standards at the end of Year 6 have been improving each year, and have at least exceeded the national average for the past three years. In 2006, standards in English and mathematics were exceptionally high, while those in science were above average. Factors that have contributed to improving standards are the staff's high expectations of pupils, good staff training and sharing of expertise, and the provision of some smaller teaching groups to help boost pupils' attainments. The school sets challenging targets for pupils. Most pupils at least meet them, and a good number of pupils exceed them. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science during their time in the school. Progress in Years 5 and 6 is especially good because the teaching is very challenging. The very small numbers of pupils joining the school who need additional support to learn English receive effective support and progress well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities generally make good progress. However, at the current time there is not enough support in some classes to meet the needs of all of the pupils who have additional learning needs, which can slow some pupils' learning. Pupils with particular talents, for example in music and sports, are challenged well in these areas and have good opportunities to excel.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils attend school regularly. They understand how to stay fit and eat healthily. They regularly participate in physical activity during lessons, after school and at breaktimes. Pupils say they generally feel safe and that incidents of bullying or serious misbehaviour are rare. Their enthusiasm for learning is evident in their very good behaviour and concentration, and their eagerness to ask and answer questions. Relationships among pupils of different ages and abilities, and from different ethnic backgrounds are very good. Pupils play happily together and mix well so that newcomers to the school soon make friends. Pupils make a very good contribution to the smooth running of the school, for example through the buddy system and school council. Older pupils take their responsibilities for carrying out jobs around the school very seriously. Pupils' good levels of confidence and self-esteem are clearly evident from talking with pupils. When asked what subjects they do well in, the younger pupils often said, 'I'm good at everything!' Pupils regularly contribute to charities and the local community and to the Church. They show respect for their own and each other's cultural traditions and religious beliefs.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Lessons are well prepared and structured. Staff have high expectations of pupils' achievements, attentiveness and participation. Introductions to lessons are brisk, which keeps pupils on tasks and learning at a good rate. Their interest is held throughout lessons, because staff use resources well, including information and communication technology (ICT), practical activities and a range of interesting tasks. Teachers' questioning is good, and this often prompts thoughtful extended answers, so that by Year 6 pupils' contribution and group discussions are of a particularly high quality. In class lessons, teaching assistants usually support the pupils they are assigned to effectively. Although their role has been extended to include teaching the whole class when teachers have release time or are absent from school, senior leaders have yet to monitor the effectiveness of this.

Teachers assess pupils' progress carefully and provide regular feedback to them during lessons. Marking is generally used well to point out where improvements are needed, but pupils are not often given the chance to build on this and correct or improve their work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy an appropriate mix of teacher led and independent activities that cover all six areas of learning. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 gives good attention to teaching the basic skills and includes French. Pupils have regular opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills to their work in other subjects. Links between other subjects are developing, but are not fully established. Visits, activity days, summer schools and pupils' involvement in sports, arts and other events enrich the curriculum well. Such activities increase pupils' enjoyment and enable them to learn from first-hand experiences. The broad range of after-school clubs is well attended. Music provision is a strength and large numbers of children learn to play instruments.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Good induction and transfer arrangements help children to settle into school quickly. Pupils in Year 6 approach the move to secondary school with confidence. Pupils who have particular needs or difficulties receive a good deal of support to ensure that transfer is managed well. The staff provide good pastoral support for all pupils and maintain good links with parents, health professional and external agencies, as and when required. Pupils trust the staff and know they can turn to an adult if they need help. There are good procedures for checking staff.

The academic guidance provided for pupils is generally good. Pupils know their targets for improvement. They receive regular feedback on their work and are increasingly encouraged to reflect on their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are quickly identified. Over time, their academic progress has been monitored effectively. In recent times, however, there have been delays in reviewing pupils' progress. The targets in some pupils' individual education plans are also not precisely matched to their identified needs or disabilities.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Staff have worked successfully with a common drive and purpose since the previous inspection to promote pupils' personal development effectively, strengthen teaching, learning and the curriculum and raise standards. Senior managers' roles are firmly established and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Subject leaders support and guide their colleagues well. Data are used well to track pupils' progress and set challenging targets for them. Governors are supportive of the school, are regularly involved and ensure that statutory requirements are met. Their role as critical friend is not as well developed.

Monitoring of teaching and learning and work in pupils' books is fairly infrequent. As a result, the school does not have a precise view of the strengths and weaknesses across all subjects and classes. It does not have a clear view of the impact of recent changes, for example to the way in which teachers' non-contact time and provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are organised. There is broad agreement amongst staff and governors that the school's main priority for the future is to raise standards in all subjects. How this will be achieved is not set out clearly in the school development plan. The areas for development are not prioritised or fully costed, and the criteria for judging success are not clearly highlighted.

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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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
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	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### 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	3
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	3
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 making us so welcome when we visited your school. We found that St Botolph's provides a good standard of education.

These are the things that work well in your school:

- You make good progress in English, mathematics and science and reach good standards.
- You are very friendly, well behaved and polite. You get on very well together and take good care of each other. You listen and concentrate well in lessons.
- The staff teach you well, make sure that you settle into school quickly, are well cared for and well prepared for secondary school.
- The staff provide many interesting activities during school time, and lots of clubs and activities after school. These help you to learn, to enjoy school, and to stay fit and healthy.

These are the things that need to improve:

- We have asked the school to make improvements to the way that pupils who need extra help with their learning are supported.
- We have asked your senior leaders to check your progress and teaching and learning more regularly, so that they can improve the way they plan for improvements.

We noticed that you all really help your headteacher, teachers and other staff to make your school a successful one. We feel sure you will want to help them to make it even better.