

St Saviour's CofE Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109153
Local Authority	Bath and North East Somerset
Inspection number	309901
Inspection dates	28–29 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Clifton

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Ashford
Headteacher	Kevin O'Shea
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2003
School address	Brookleaze Place Larkhall Bath BA1 6RB
Telephone number	01225 310137
Fax number	01225 338 684

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller-than-average school. Most pupils attend from the local area. There is a slightly above average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties many of whom have behavioural difficulties. Most pupils are White British. Nearly all pupils coming into Year 3 attended the neighbouring infant school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

St Saviour's is a satisfactory and improving school. There are strengths in the care, guidance and support provided and in pupils' personal development and well-being, which are all good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school leadership team rightly recognises that standards in writing are not high enough and that more work is needed to improve the consistency of pupils' progress in writing as they move through the school, so that their skills are improved systematically. Subject leaders are strongly focused on raising achievement. Their work is currently securing improvements in both mathematics and writing. As a result, pupils make satisfactory and, in a few areas, good progress across the school. Achievement is satisfactory and standards are slightly above average. There is some fluctuation in pupils' attainment when they join the school. Standards on entry for the current Year 6 were slightly above average. More recently, however, they have been above average. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing basic skills to help them in the future.

Relationships are a strength of the school. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and, on a few occasions, outstanding. Pupils are respected and listened to, and they say they enjoy coming to school. They express views confidently, with a clear determination to be heard whilst being prepared to listen to each other's ideas. As a result, they have a clear voice in the school and are keen to contribute through taking on additional responsibilities. They say that they feel safe and appreciate the help they get from teachers. They clearly enjoy learning because teachers make lessons fun. However, the work they are given is not always sufficiently challenging. Pupils play together happily and display a good regard for the safety and well-being of others. They enjoy sport and have a good understanding about the importance of being active. However, they do not always make healthy choices in what they eat. A large majority of parents say that the school is a happy and welcoming place. They comment, for example, that, 'The staff and headteacher are very approachable. There is a good balance between academic achievement and care for each child.' Despite the many positive comments that parents make, a few feel that they are not listened to sufficiently well. Pupils' attendance is average, although a few pupils do not attend regularly enough without good reason. The school's leaders have not always followed these up quickly enough.

The headteacher is successfully developing the skills of staff. As a result, teaching is improving, and subject leaders are rapidly introducing a number of initiatives which are making a difference. Topics are suitably organised to build on pupils' previous learning and understanding. However, leaders have rightly identified that links between subjects are not sufficiently well developed and that writing activities do not have a clear enough purpose. Therefore, opportunities are missed to develop skills across the curriculum. Good links have been established with partner schools and these are currently being strengthened to ensure a smoother transition for the younger pupils coming into the school. Pupils in Year 6 express sadness about leaving school but excitement about future prospects. Recent developments have given rise to strong improvement over the last year and strengthening leadership shows that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure writing activities have a clear purpose and that pupils' writing skills are developed systematically.
- Improve links between subjects so that skills are practised more regularly in different contexts.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is rising. The present Year 6 are currently attaining average standards in English and science and above-average standards in mathematics. Across the school, standards in reading are better than those in writing. The Year 6 national test results in 2007 were average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' ability to calculate mentally in mathematics is improving and older pupils apply these skills well to solve problems.

Recent improvements in the provision for writing are securely lifting standards in English. Across the school, rates of learning are satisfactory and are often good for the older pupils. Leaders keep a careful watch on pupils who are not doing well enough. Additional help and support is carefully targeted and is helping these pupils to make up any lost ground. Pupils with learning difficulties make progress similar to that of other pupils in the school. The support provided to help these pupils improve their reading skills is particularly successful and, as a result, their achievement in this area is good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' behaviour is good and outstanding on a few occasions. Their positive attitudes make a considerable contribution to their learning. Their social and moral development is particularly good and supported well through lively and thought-provoking assemblies. At break times, pupils are very active, with football being a particular favourite. They enjoy each other's company when playing together, expending considerable energy. They are enthusiastic about the variety of sports offered. Pupils know about healthy eating but do not always do so, as many sweet snacks and crisps are consumed.

Pupils feel very safe and secure and are confident that any issues are dealt with quickly by teachers. They show responsible attitudes towards each other. Pupils have a clear voice in the school and enjoy taking on a wide range of additional responsibilities, such as being 'buddies' to younger pupils. They are keen to ensure that the 'friendship stop' is successful so that nobody feels left out.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The enthusiasm of teachers in many lessons enhances pupils' enjoyment of learning. Pupils' relationships with adults and with each other are very positive and they work well in groups and independently. Teachers use the new interactive whiteboards very well to engage the interest of pupils. They have high expectations of behaviour and manage pupils well, so pupils become confident learners and are keen to respond. However, there are some occasions when pupils are not given work that is challenging enough because planning does not take sufficient account of what they have learned previously. On other occasions, pupils are kept too long on the carpet or learning is not moved on quickly enough. As a result, there are times when pupils

do not make as much progress as they could. Marking does not consistently give guidance on how pupils can improve their work. In most lessons, teachers question pupils well and direct questions across the class to ensure that all the pupils are actively involved. Changes introduced by leaders are strengthening teaching and learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Leaders have reviewed the curriculum and placed a particular emphasis on improving basic skills. The current focus on improving writing skills by ensuring there is a clear purpose for writing is raising standards. Strong links with the local rugby club in the 'write between the posts' project improved the motivation of boys because they were given real reasons to write. Topics are suitably planned to cover all subjects. However, the school acknowledges correctly that there is a need for much greater linking of subjects in topics, including the use of information and communication technology (ICT), to enable pupils to practise skills on a more regular basis. In science, pupils do not use ICT enough in investigations or research.

Good opportunities are provided for pupils to enrich their experiences. An annual school production involves all the pupils in the school, and a wide variety of popular clubs, ranging from lacrosse to yoga, enhances the curriculum well. The use of visitors and visits links well with current learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel safe and well cared for and this good pastoral care is reflected in the pupils' mature attitudes and good behaviour. Adults working in the school are carefully checked to ensure they are suitable, and robust arrangements are in place to assess any risks pupils could encounter whether on or off the school site.

Good use is made of individual learning targets, which pupils understand. However, written comments made by teachers are inconsistent and do not always provide enough information to involve the pupils in their next stage of learning. The result is that pupils are not able to use these comments to improve their work. Teaching assistants give good support to pupils with learning difficulties and those pupils in the first stages of learning English. The additional support given to a group of talented mathematicians provides them with a high level of challenge.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher is ably supported by a cohesive staff team who share the vision to raise standards across the school. He is well supported by a school leadership team and effective subject leaders who have written detailed action plans to raise pupils' achievement in their subjects. Subject leaders are rapidly developing their work. The school has a mostly accurate view of its overall performance but does not always make areas for improvement explicit enough, such as what needs to be done to improve teaching.

Several well-planned intervention strategies are being used to raise standards in writing. Some are new and for these it is too soon to gauge their impact, but others are having a very positive

and sustained effect. Challenging targets are set to raise the standards in each year group. This is now resulting in better use of assessment and improved planning of work for all groups of pupils. This is the main reason why learning is improving but has yet to result in consistently good progress across the school. Pupils' progress is assessed and tracked systematically, and the resulting analysis of this information is helping leaders to identify where improvements are needed.

Governors are supportive and realise the need to become more involved in strategic planning and monitoring in order to offer greater challenge. The school comprises a number of separate buildings on a relatively steep site, which makes access difficult for those with a physical disability.

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Annex A

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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

30 January 2008

Dear Pupils Inspection of St Saviour's Junior School, Bath BA1 6RB

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and were very impressed with your friendliness, maturity and confidence. The valuable information you gave us was a great help. We think your school provides you with a satisfactory education that has some good features. The care, guidance and support you receive are good and you are making satisfactory progress. Leadership of your school is satisfactory and the school is well placed to improve further.

What we most liked about your school

- Your school is improving because the leadership is strengthening, and this is raising standards, particularly in mathematics.
- You enjoy school, have positive attitudes to learning and your behaviour is good and sometimes outstanding.
- You settle quickly in school because of the good and improving links with your infant school.
- The school ensures you are very safe and secure.
- Teaching is satisfactory but is improving.
- Your teachers are enthusiastic and make learning fun.

We have asked your headteacher and others to do these things

- Improve the consistency of your progress in writing by ensuring writing activities have a clear purpose.
- Improve how subjects are linked together so that you can practise your skills more regularly.

With your hard work and help, we think that your school will continue to improve.

Yours faithfully

Peter Clifton Lead Inspector

30 January 2008



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Peter Clifton
Lead Inspector