

# Baydon St Nicholas Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	126394
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	315529
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 May 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Laver

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 category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	106
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Enid Johnson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Peter Chambers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2004
<b>School address</b>	Ermin Street Baydon Marlborough SN8 2JJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01672 540554
<b>Fax number</b>	01672 540554

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is much smaller than average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, which include some with difficulties in literacy and numeracy and some with behavioural and emotional difficulties, is also 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

Baydon St. Nicholas provides a good standard of education. It has some particular strengths, which both parents and pupils recognise. These parental comments are typical of several: 'The school provides a well-disciplined and happy environment' and 'They treat the children as individuals in a caring, nurturing and supportive atmosphere.' The school provides an environment which emphasises care and personal support at the same time as promoting good academic progress. This combination ensures that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of education and life generally.

Children have a good start to their school career. From a range of prior experiences, they make good progress in the Reception Year so that, when they enter Year 1, they are well placed to continue achieving well as they move up through the school. Test results of pupils at the ages of seven and 11 demonstrate a trend of good progress and above average standards, sometimes significantly so. Standards inevitably fluctuate as this is a small school with relatively few pupils in each year group. The groups being tested vary significantly from year to year in the ratio of boys to girls, in the proportion of pupils with a range of learning difficulties, and in the proportion of pupils who have joined or left the school other than at the usual times. Nevertheless, the good teaching, the well-targeted support, and the increasing sophistication of procedures to track and record progress all ensure that the great majority of pupils, whatever their ability or individual needs, make good progress. For example, those pupils with advanced skills in mathematics benefit from having challenging learning opportunities provided by a nearby secondary school. There has been some relative underachievement in writing by a small minority of more able pupils, but the school is addressing this by strategies such as increasing the range of writing opportunities throughout the curriculum.

The effective leadership is not complacent, but has focused on building on existing successes. The overall quality of teaching is good and has continued to improve, and teachers' generally high expectations have been a significant factor in good pupil progress. Nevertheless, the school has rightly identified that still more can be achieved, particularly by improving the use of assessment so that pupils' targets are used more consistently in the classroom to improve learning. Furthermore, as pupils themselves recognise, marking does not always give them clear guidance on how to improve their level of work. The school has rightly identified these areas for development: however, subject coordinators are currently not in a position to directly monitor classroom activities and help in spreading best practice more consistently, although staff meetings are used for this purpose.

The school successfully helps pupils to develop very well as individuals. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. It is not only the teaching that helps pupils to make good progress, pupils' positive attitude and their enjoyment in coming to school are also important. These are reflected in above average attendance and in pupils' enthusiasm for active learning through discussion and through practical activities, particularly in science, design and technology and work with computers. Pupils talk about learning as 'fun' in the best lessons. They are also enthusiastic about school because they feel safe and well supported.

The headteacher has high expectations, allied to a realistic understanding of how to move the school even further forward. This is evident in appropriate planning, which is helping to develop links between different subjects and assisting teachers to implement strategies to improve writing and comprehension skills, for example by developing a wider bank of resources and

techniques. Parental support in providing new resources and the dedication of staff and governors have enabled the school to minimise the impact of deficiencies in accommodation on the overall quality of education. The record of the school in maintaining good standards and a flourishing learning environment, and its recognition of how to build on these successes, mean that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. A particular strength is the emphasis on promoting children's independence within a well-managed environment. There is good teaching, providing a range of activities which excite the children. The coordinator keeps very good records of progress. Children enter Reception with a range of prior experiences. They make rapid progress in developing personal and social skills so that by the time they join Year 1, they achieve above expectations for their age group. They also develop well academically and, in several instances, are well above expectations in their command of language and numeracy skills.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve marking and make more consistent use of targets in teaching in order to give all pupils a clear idea of how to raise their achievement, particularly in writing.
- Develop the monitoring role of subject coordinators in order to spread best teaching and learning practice more consistently throughout the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Most pupils reach above average standards, and the great majority achieve well. The 2007 national test results showed results for eleven-year-olds to be significantly above average, despite a small number of pupils not achieving quite as well as they might at the higher levels in writing. The current eleven-year-olds are of an average standard in English and mathematics. However, these pupils at the age of seven had a significantly lower level of attainment than the majority of pupils in other classes, and the proportion of pupils in Year 6 who have joined the school from elsewhere, long after the usual starting point, is well above average. The great majority of these older pupils, like others in the school, have made good progress from their starting point, because of positive attitudes towards learning and the success of the school's initiatives to maintain or drive up standards.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' spiritual and moral development is outstanding. It is evident, for example, in assemblies, which engage all pupils well and successfully promote reflection, a sense of community and a strong Christian ethos. Social and cultural development is good. The school is a harmonious institution, one which encourages pupils to cooperate as learners. The majority of pupils rapidly develop as articulate, responsible individuals and budding citizens, confident in activities such as class presentations. They have a good understanding of the importance of living healthily and they enjoy sport, although they would like more opportunities for this outside lessons. The positive attitude of pupils towards most aspects of school is reflected in above average attendance and very good behaviour, with no exclusions from school. Pupils' confidence and above average academic standards prepare them well for the next stage of education. Pupils

enjoy opportunities to take on responsibility around the school and to contribute to the outside community, although several feel that the school council could be more effective, and some very articulate individuals would welcome more opportunities to express their views.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The majority of teaching is good. The overall quality has improved as the result of regular opportunities for professional development and a willingness to take on strategies such as those designed to boost performance in writing. In the best lessons, teachers encourage pupils to think and learn independently or collaboratively. These lessons ensure that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and the most able, achieve well through a judicious combination of support from teachers and teaching assistants and the planning of appropriately challenging tasks. In the small minority of less effective lessons, learning is less rapid because teachers make less use of pupils' prior learning and give more able pupils in particular too few opportunities for more independent work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils particularly enjoy the clubs and external visits. The school offers a good range of these, although some parents would like even more emphasis on the creative arts. Pupils enjoy the programme for personal, social and health education, mainly because it promotes discussion. The school makes good use of links with other schools, particularly a nearby secondary school for support in teaching French. The curriculum caters well for the needs of pupils of varying levels of ability, and an initiative to create more links between different subjects is beginning to pay dividends, particularly in further improving the range and quality of writing.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

Baydon St. Nicholas is an inclusive school, because pupils and parents recognise the family atmosphere which embraces all learners. Pupils feel generally safe and well supported, although some feel that, on the few occasions that there is 'silly' behaviour at lunchtime, it could be dealt with more promptly and effectively. Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and make good progress. Child protection arrangements are robust. The school has developed good procedures for assessing, recording and tracking pupils' academic progress; the detailed portfolios for each pupil are a particularly impressive means of demonstrating progress over time. Although there are a variety of targets, generally understood by pupils, teachers do not yet use them consistently in the classroom or in their marking to further boost learning and show pupils how to improve their work.

## **Leadership and management**

#### **Grade: 2**

The experienced headteacher knows his school well, accurately pinpointing its strengths and areas for improvement. Self-evaluation is rigorous and reflects very high expectations. The

headteacher is supported by a knowledgeable and experienced governing body, which is very involved in everyday school life and provides a good blend of support and critical challenge. The school makes good use of resources such as a nearby secondary school and maintains good external links with other schools and agencies. Staff are willing to take on responsibility and are committed to further improvement, although subject coordinators currently have no direct opportunity to monitor developments in the classroom. As a result, they have fewer opportunities to facilitate the spreading of best practice consistently throughout the school.

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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?	2
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

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	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2

### 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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

20 May 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Baydon St. Nicholas Church of England Primary School, Marlborough SN8 2JJ.

Thank you welcoming us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed seeing you at work and at play, and it was interesting to talk to many of you. You are very good ambassadors for your school. We were impressed by your politeness and your confidence in telling us what you do in school. You also told us what you particularly liked and what you think about how the school could be made even better.

Baydon St. Nicholas gives you a good education. You and your parents already know this, and we agree with many of the things you said. We agree that the school looks after you well, and that your teachers teach you well. You are very good at expressing your opinions and we know that you would like even more opportunities to contribute to the school through activities like the school council. We were impressed by the pride which most of you take in your work. You make good progress because of your teachers, and because you take your work seriously. In fact, many of you do better than pupils in many other schools. You also have a good understanding of how to lead healthy lives. You behave well and attend school regularly. You are also good at helping each other and working well together, for example when you work on projects in lessons.

Mr Chambers leads the school very well and has a good understanding of how well you are doing and how you could do even better. You can help by continuing to work hard, just like your teachers do, as, for example, when they try to help some of you improve your writing.

You are good learners, and we have asked the school to help you learn even better in two particular ways. One is to give you more information when marking your work and to use your targets more to show you how to do even better. The other is for teachers to help each other even more by sharing ideas on how you can improve in areas of your work such as writing.

Once again, thank you for your welcome, and good luck for the future.

John Laver Lead Inspector

20 May 2008

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John Laver  
Lead Inspector