

St Andrew's Benn CofE (Voluntary Aided) Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	130877
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315641
Inspection dates	20–21 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Ken Buxton HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	232
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eric Wood
Headteacher	Nikkie Jones
Date of previous school inspection	16 November 2006
School address	Chester Street Rugby CV21 3NX
Telephone number	01788 574697
Fax number	01788 574697

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	20–21 November 2007
Inspection number	315641

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

St Andrew's Benn is a primary school of average size. Although most pupils come from White British backgrounds, a significant proportion is from minority ethnic backgrounds and a higher than average percentage does not have English as a first language. The school experiences higher than average numbers of pupils joining and leaving at times other than the usual transfer times. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average, but for those with a statement of special educational need is higher than the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory and improving school and in accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. This is because sufficient progress has been made since the last inspection when the school was placed in a category of concern.

The new headteacher has been the catalyst for change. Since starting at the school in April 2007 she has energised the staff to focus on the key issues identified in the previous inspection report, improving the quality of education provided at the school. As a result, the leadership and management have improved and are now satisfactory. Self-evaluation is accurate and the staff now have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. A clear plan of action which has been agreed by the staff and governors is being implemented. This plan is already starting to have a positive impact on the quality of provision and on pupils' achievements. For example, the recent restructuring of Key Stage 2 has reduced class sizes considerably and enabled pupils to benefit from working in smaller groups. Consequently, teachers are now more focused on setting suitably challenging targets for pupils to achieve. They are also increasing opportunities for pupils to engage in practical activities which help to promote their interest and enthusiasm. In particular, there is an increased emphasis on investigative science activities. Changes already made, and the school's plans for further development, demonstrate that the school has good capacity to improve under the headteacher's strong and clear leadership.

In the Foundation Stage, the children settle in well and they are given sensitive support to help them concentrate. Overall, standards are lower than expected when children join the school. Children make satisfactory progress, although by the start of Key Stage 1, their attainment is still below the standards expected for their age. The recent changes brought about by the new headteacher were introduced too late to have any measurable impact on the results pupils achieved in the 2007 national tests. Despite reversing the downward trend in Key Stage 1, the school's results overall were lower and for some Key Stage 2 subjects were much lower than those achieved nationally. This situation is improving as pupils' current work shows. Although the presentation of pupils' work is not yet good enough, most pupils across the school are now achieving higher standards than was previously the case. The school recognises that the rate of pupils' progress must increase further to eradicate underachievement.

The quality of the teaching is still satisfactory but it is improving. For example, teachers are making better use of assessment information than in the past to plan work that is more relevant to pupils' needs. Teachers also have a better understanding of the standards pupils are attaining and this knowledge is helping them to increase the progress pupils make during lessons. However, the quality and usefulness of some of the marking remains an area for further development. Not all marking does enough to tell pupils how to improve their performance. The curriculum is satisfactory. It has recently been reorganised and there is already good evidence that the changes are enabling pupils to make greater progress.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Pupils enjoy coming to school and, as a result, attendance levels are improving. The small classes and the higher expectations evident across the school are helping to raise the standard of pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand how to stay safe and the importance of keeping healthy. The poor Key Stage 2 results in 2007 show that some pupils who left last summer were not sufficiently prepared for

the next stage of their education. Pupils' current satisfactory progress shows that they are now being adequately prepared for the next stage of their education.

The school is providing satisfactory and improving levels of care and guidance. Many of the recent changes have not yet had sufficient time to impact fully on raising pupils' achievement. For example, although the new procedures to track pupils' progress are helping improve teachers' knowledge of pupils' performance, there are still gaps in the school's records.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Adults create a caring, secure and calm environment and, as a result, children enjoy coming to school and want to work hard. They settle quickly when they start in the Nursery because they feel safe. The well established routines help children know what is expected of them and they behave well. Relationships with parents are good. Adults give children just the right amount of help but also encourage them to be independent. Teaching is satisfactory and, as a result, children make satisfactory progress. Planning and assessment are now more focused, but have not yet impacted on increasing children's rate of progress. Children participate in a wide range of activities, but some of these activities lack a clear enough purpose and they do not always stimulate the children's imagination. There is a strong and appropriate emphasis on developing children's language skills, but adults sometimes use words that the children do not understand which gives rise to misunderstandings.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the amount of good and better teaching so that pupils' progress is accelerated in all year groups.
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking so that pupils receive clear guidance about how to improve their performance in all classes.
- Improve the presentation of pupils' written work.

A small proportion of the 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

Children's attainment on entry is, with the exception of mathematics, well below the level expected for their age. From their low starting points children make satisfactory progress. This means that by the end of the Reception Year their standards are still below those expected for their age. Below average standards have been continuing through Key Stage 1, but the most recent results show an improvement. In 2007, pupils' rate of progress increased and their attainment improved to just below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. These higher standards are the result of teachers planning more accurately, making greater use of teaching assistants to support individuals and groups of pupils, and setting curricular targets for pupils to achieve.

The 2007 results for Year 6 pupils show that they made inadequate progress. Their attainment was below the national average for English and well below for mathematics and science. These results are partly due to weaknesses in the school's recent past when the school was without a substantive headteacher. As a consequence, teachers lacked guidance as to how they could

improve pupils' progress. This situation has now changed with the new headteacher taking charge. Following her appointment there is now strong evidence that pupils are attaining standards that are more appropriate for their age and that they are making better progress. Pupils' progress is now satisfactory because teachers are monitoring pupils' performance more regularly and with greater accuracy. Lessons are planned more carefully and are better matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are receiving good levels of additional support and consequently they make at least satisfactory progress and a few make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their enthusiasm for all aspects of school life and their improving attendance, which is now broadly average. One Year 2 pupil said that he learned a lot and enjoyed his work because 'teachers stretch your brains'. Pupils feel safe in school and say there is always someone to turn to if there is a problem. They have a good understanding of safe practices and move sensibly about the school. Their behaviour is satisfactory, but improving as they become familiar with the recently introduced higher expectations of their conduct. Pupils know about the importance of healthy eating and taking exercise regularly and most put this into practice.

Pupils' contribution to the school and the wider community is good. For example, pupils collect money for charities and make organised visits to local places of interest such as the church. Pupils are very positive about the changes that the democratically elected school council have made. For example, the council's decision to use some of their budget to purchase new playground equipment was very popular and has made playtimes more enjoyable.

Pupils' social and spiritual development are satisfactory and moral and cultural development are good. Pupils know right from wrong and show respect for others. They have a good understanding and knowledge of the rich diversity of the community in which they live.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of the teaching is variable across the school, but overall it is satisfactory. Considerable work has taken place to ensure that teachers make better use of assessment information to support their lesson planning. This initiative has helped ensure that, in most lessons, activities are matched more accurately to pupils' needs. As a result, the most pupils now make the expected progress. Most teachers are also beginning to relate classroom activities more accurately to pupils' own experiences and interests. When this occurs, pupils see the relevance of activities and the lesson's purpose. Teachers are introducing greater opportunities for practical work. This is particularly evident in science where pupils are responding with enthusiasm to investigative activities. This practical emphasis is helping pupils learn from first hand experience. Teaching assistants contribute well to lessons often working with individuals or small groups of pupils, for example providing effective support for pupils who have English as an additional language and enabling them to make satisfactory progress.

Pupils' progress is at least satisfactory in most lessons, but the pace of some lessons is still not quick enough and this reduces opportunities to learn. The quality and presentation of pupils'

written work are often poor because teachers' expectations of pupils are not high enough in this respect. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. Some marking explains how pupils can improve their work, but this guidance is not evident across the school.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Since the last inspection the curriculum has been reorganised to ensure that it meets pupils' needs better. For example, additional time has been allocated to the teaching of English and mathematics. There is strong evidence that the impact of this recent initiative is already enabling pupils to make better progress. The more practical approach to science is increasing pupils' excitement for and their enjoyment of the subject. For example, Year 2 pupils made good progress learning how to construct simple electrical circuits whilst also developing their knowledge of the associated health and safety hazards. The school is now rightly focusing on identifying more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing and number skills in other subjects.

Pupils speak very enthusiastically about the visits they have been on and the visitors who have come into school. Year 6 pupils are already eagerly anticipating the visit to Stratford upon Avon to perform at the theatre. There is a satisfactory range of clubs which pupils are keen to see increase. Pupils have taken some responsibility for achieving this goal. For example, a few of the older, more able pupils have organised the 'Children Round the World' club. This helps pupils, newly arrived from other countries, to integrate into the school and develop their confidence in speaking English. The school's leaders recognise that the range of clubs and trips needs to increase in order to broaden pupils' horizons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff place a high priority on caring for pupils and providing a safe environment. The school is a happy, friendly place in which positive relationships and good pastoral support help pupils grow into well rounded individuals. Pupils are confident to talk to adults in school if they have any concerns. Effective child protection and adult vetting procedures are in place. Risk assessments are carried out diligently ensuring pupils' safety. The school receives satisfactory and improving levels of support from external support agencies. For example, the special needs coordinator is working more closely with partners from the local authority and, as a result, has been able to access additional support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This extra help is already beginning to help these pupils to make better progress.

Recently established procedures to track pupils' progress are satisfactory but there has been insufficient time for these to impact on pupils' achievement and standards. The school has worked hard to improve attendance and has achieved some success.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Since the last inspection, the school's leadership and management have improved and are now satisfactory. The new headteacher has developed good relationships and given the school the pride and belief in itself needed to improve. Whilst recognising that much remains to be done, she has been instrumental in enabling the school to start taking greater responsibility of its

development. She has achieved this by developing the leadership team's skills and expertise. For example, subject leaders are now monitoring their subject areas across the school. They have been supported well by the headteacher and the local authority and, as a result, they are growing in confidence and now have a much clearer understanding of what needs to be done next for the school to improve. There is recognition, for example, that the proportion of good and better teaching needs to increase. However, the improvements already achieved, such as making greater use of assessment data to inform planning and the pupils' more positive attitudes, are secure evidence of the leadership team's good capability to improve. Governors continue to give satisfactory support. They are beginning to develop the ability to hold senior leaders to account for the school's performance.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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?	3
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	3
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?	3

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	3
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

22 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of St Andrew's Benn CofE (Voluntary Aided) Primary School, Rugby CV21 3NX

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited to see how well it is doing. We enjoyed meeting many of you during our visit and talking with you about your school. You clearly enjoy school and want to do well. You told us how pleased you are now that your new headteacher has been appointed. Since starting in April she has introduced lots of changes across the school which you like. Many of you were very pleased about the smaller class sizes in Key Stage 2. This change is helping you to make more progress. You also explained that because pupils from different year groups work together in the same class they get on better with each other than they did previously. You said that this has helped improve behaviour across the school and we agree. We also learned about how the school council's work is helping to change things for the better. The recent allocation of funds from the school fayre to purchase new equipment for the playground has proved a real success.

Your headteacher is extremely determined to give you every opportunity to achieve your best. She is working very hard with the governors and teachers to make the school even better. They already have many ideas for improvements and have started some important ones already. For example, the recent drive to improve your attendance is working well so we would like to congratulate Class HJ for achieving very high attendance during the week 5 to 11 November. We have asked the adults to improve the school in a few other ways as well. We have asked them to increase the amount of good teaching so that you make faster progress. We have also suggested that they help you to know exactly how you can improve your work when they mark it as this is another way in which your progress will increase. Another thing that we have asked the teachers to do is to make sure that you take more care to present your work well. This will help it to become second nature for you to write neatly all the time.

You can also play your part by working hard and making sure that you do your very best. We wish you every success.

Yours sincerely

Ken Buxton Her Majesty's Inspector

22 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of St Andrew's Benn CofE (Voluntary Aided) Primary School, Rugby CV21 3NX

Thank you for welcoming us to your school when we visited to see how well it is doing. We enjoyed meeting many of you during our visit and talking with you about your school. You clearly enjoy school and want to do well. You told us how pleased you are now that your new headteacher has been appointed. Since starting in April she has introduced lots of changes across the school which you like. Many of you were very pleased about the smaller class sizes in Key Stage 2. This change is helping you to make more progress. You also explained that because pupils from different year groups work together in the same class they get on better with each other than they did previously. You said that this has helped improve behaviour across the school and we agree. We also learned about how the school council's work is helping to change things for the better. The recent allocation of funds from the school fayre to purchase new equipment for the playground has proved a real success.

Your headteacher is extremely determined to give you every opportunity to achieve your best. She is working very hard with the governors and teachers to make the school even better. They already have many ideas for improvements and have started some important ones already. For example, the recent drive to improve your attendance is working well so we would like to congratulate Class HJ for achieving very high attendance during the week 5 to 11 November. We have asked the adults to improve the school in a few other ways as well. We have asked them to increase the amount of good teaching so that you make faster progress. We have also suggested that they help you to know exactly how you can improve your work when they mark it as this is another way in which your progress will increase. Another thing that we have asked the teachers to do is to make sure that you take more care to present your work well. This will help it to become second nature for you to write neatly all the time.

You can also play your part by working hard and making sure that you do your very best. We wish you every success.

Yours sincerely

Ken Buxton
Her Majesty's Inspector