

Drakes' Broughton St Barnabas CofE First and Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116862
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	316524
Inspection dates	13–14 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Andrew Watters HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Middle deemed primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Lloyd
Headteacher	Tim Ireson
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2006
School address	Stonebow Road Drakes Broughton Pershore WR10 2AW
Telephone number	01905 840366
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Age group	4-12
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

When the school was inspected in January 2006, it was judged to require special measures. It was asked to: improve the quality of teaching; challenge all pupils effectively; raise standards; improve leadership and management at all levels; and, implement more rigorous procedures for evaluating the school's effectiveness in eradicating underachievement. HMI and Additional Inspectors visited the school in June and November 2006 and in February and June 2007 to assess the school's progress in addressing these issues. At the last monitoring inspection, the school was judged to be making good progress in tackling the weaknesses listed above.

The school serves a generally advantaged socio-economic community and most pupils are of White British origin. Very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. Seventeen per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and one pupil has a statement of special educational need. Each year, a significant proportion of pupils from two neighbouring first schools enter the school in Year 5.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

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 special measures. St Barnabas is a buoyant and confident school community. Its journey from failure to success has been difficult and, at times, turbulent. All staff have worked with dedication and commitment to turn the school around, providing a satisfactory quality of education and a bright hope for the future.

There is a relentless focus on raising achievement and improving the life chances of all pupils. Standards are above average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Whilst most pupils achieve well, just over a quarter are not making the progress of which they are capable. This is most evident in writing and in Year 3. Leadership and management are good. Under the resolute and effective leadership of the headteacher, the school has renewed its sense of educational purpose and clarity of direction. Senior teachers provide good role models for other staff and good support for the headteacher. There is a strong sense of team spirit and high levels of morale. Expectations and aspirations for the school's future are high. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some that is good and a small minority, which is outstanding. There is, however, not enough good teaching to ensure consistently good rates of progress for all pupils.

The pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The pupils behave well, are good humoured, confident and happy. One pupil said, 'I like coming to school because I learn a lot and enjoy meeting my friends.' The quality of care, support and guidance pupils receive is good and they are well looked after. They appreciate and are reassured by the support of adults, and relationships between pupils and adults are good. The curriculum is satisfactory with a good focus on raising achievement in literacy and numeracy.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. In a recent school survey, 43% of parents responded to questionnaires and strongly endorsed the school's leadership and quality of education provided for their children.

The chair of governors provides effective and dedicated leadership to the governing body, which keeps a watchful eye on the school's progress. The school has improved well since its last inspection and has good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children receive a satisfactory start to their life in the school. They are welcomed into a secure and generally attractive learning environment. An outdoor classroom and the Forest School initiative are beginning to make a positive contribution to improving the quality of the pupils' learning experiences. The curriculum is satisfactory. An increased focus on the direct teaching of key skills, introduced recently, is beginning to have a positive impact on children's achievements. The provision and outcomes for children's independent activities is much weaker. There is insufficient adult intervention to raise achievement when the children are working independently.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement further, particularly in writing and in Year 3, and ensure that all pupils make satisfactory and better progress.

- Improve the quality of education in the Foundation Stage.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, increasing the proportion of good and outstanding teaching.

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

When pupils enter the school their attainment is currently average. In the past, it has been slightly higher and varied more than it is now. Standards in the 2007 national tests for 7 and 11 year olds are above the national average. Just over a quarter of pupils in Year 2 and nearly half the pupils in Year 6 did extremely well in the tests and reached the level above that expected for their age. Standards are higher in reading and mathematics than in writing, where pupils make less progress than they should, particularly the boys. Pupils' achievement overall between Years 1 and 7 is satisfactory. About a quarter of the pupils make good progress, and some make exceptional progress, such as in Year 6. Whilst rates of progress are accelerating rapidly, the school is aware that the legacy of past underachievement and instability in teaching continues to adversely affect the progress of just over a quarter of the pupils. This is most evident in Year 3.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils have very positive and mature attitudes. One pupil who reflected the views of many said, 'I definitely like school. We all get on well together. The teachers are great and really help you learn.' The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are tolerant of people with views and traditions different from their own, although their understanding of other cultures and faiths is less secure. The recent changes to the behaviour policy have been particularly effective in raising pupils' self-esteem further. A clear moral code results in good behaviour, although occasionally there is some inattention during class discussions and when leaving assemblies. Pupils are polite and considerate to each other and to adults. They feel safe at school and report that the rare incidences of bullying are quickly and effectively dealt with. They really enjoy lessons and this reflects well in their improved attendance, which is above average. Pupils appreciate the feedback they get from teachers on how they can improve their work. They lead healthy lifestyles and understand the importance of taking regular exercise and making sensible choices about what they eat. Pupils enjoy having responsibilities, for example, the school council has secured improvements to the changing rooms and toilets. They readily volunteer to take part in local arts events and are eagerly looking forward to a choir competition in a local shopping mall. Above average standards and good attitudes to learning are preparing pupils well for secondary school and their future in employment.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Whilst the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, there is not enough consistently good teaching and some of the satisfactory teaching is quite fragile. The best teaching, which

is having a good, and sometimes outstanding, impact on the pupils' achievements, helps the pupils learn new skills and acquire new knowledge at a good pace. Learning is sequenced carefully and pupils respond really well to teachers' high expectations, for example in numeracy in Year 6 and physical education in Year 7. Assessment is used well to inform planning, work is matched to the pupils' different starting points and capabilities, and contexts for learning are interesting, creative and stimulating. Where pupils make less progress than they should, the pace of learning is too slow, the teachers' subject knowledge is insecure and the pupils' work is not engaging their interest or challenging thinking sufficiently. Teaching assistants make a positive contribution to raising achievement and are deployed effectively, for example in a phonics lesson in Year 2.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provides pupils with continuity and progression in their learning and is under continual review. Teaching schemes ensure that most pupils are challenged appropriately and information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to improve the pupils' learning experiences. The good facilities for pupils in Year 7 provide opportunities for specialist lessons in science, physical education, music, art and food technology. French is taught in Years 5, 6 and 7. Pupils' experiences are enriched in the arts and sport, both during the school day and in the good range of extra-curricular classes and clubs, which are well attended. The school has twice been awarded the Artsmark Gold and Activemark gold, and has also received recognition for a variety of other initiatives, including ECO school bronze. The curriculum is extended by residential and day trips, such as the visit to Plymouth, a multi-cultural week, and by visitors to the school. In the week of the inspection a local theatre group was in school working with pupils in key stages 2 and 3. The school has identified pupils' awareness of the diversity of British culture beyond their own experiences as a priority for development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's detailed knowledge of the needs of each pupil ensures that pupils are well cared for. Health and safety and child protection arrangements are robust and are regularly reviewed and updated. The sensitive and effective care and guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities ensures their progress is accelerating. The school uses its many links with outside agencies and other schools well to support learning. For example, behaviour advisors from the local authority have strengthened this aspect of the school's work. Teachers' marking and feedback on the quality of pupils' work is improving and is good overall. Most pupils have a clear idea of their targets and what they need to do to improve their work. However, in a small minority of classes, this good feature is not strong enough and some pupils are unsure how to tackle weaknesses in their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The good quality of leadership and management, including strategic planning, educational direction and sense of purpose, is secured effectively by the headteacher's impressive drive for continuing improvement and his high expectations. He enjoys the confidence of all staff and receives good support from the senior management team. One of the senior teachers said, 'We

know what we need to do to improve further, we're setting the agenda and we are determined to achieve even more success.' Subject leadership is improving rapidly and is satisfactory. The arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance are systematic and rigorous. Teachers are held accountable for the standards and achievement of the pupils in their care and pupils' progress is tracked extremely carefully. The school's good capacity for further improvement reflects well in the success achieved so far in eliminating underachievement. Pupils' targets are challenging and realistic. The governing body is successfully carrying out its statutory duties. The work of various committees, particularly the curriculum committee, is having a positive impact on holding the school to account for the pupils' achievements.

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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?	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	2
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	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?	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?	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

15 November 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Barnabas CE First and Middle School, Drakes' Broughton, Pershore WR10 2AW

Thank you very much for welcoming us into your school. Over the two years I have been visiting, you have always been welcoming, courteous and happy to talk with me about your school. It has not been easy for you but you have always tried to do your best and behave well. On this visit, where I have been able to say that your school is no longer struggling but is now steadily improving many of you have come up to speak with me and other inspectors to say how much you enjoy coming to school. We have really appreciated your good humour and willingness to speak with us.

I am pleased to tell you that your school is now doing as well as many other schools and that I don't need to come back again next term to check how you are getting on! I will miss my visits but am really pleased that Mr Ireson, the teachers, governors and all the adults who work with you have improved the school and the quality of education that you receive.

As Mr Ireson knows, there is still a lot of hard work to come to make sure that you all carry on getting better and that St Barnabas goes from strength to strength. I have asked the school to do three important things to help this happen.

- Make sure that all of you achieve really well and make good progress in your work.
- Carry on improving lessons for those of you in the Reception class.
- Make sure that all your lessons are interesting and challenging and help you learn new things

You will be able to help your teachers by always working hard, asking them to help when you don't understand what to do or your work is too easy, and carrying on behaving as well as you do. I have really enjoyed my time visiting your school and will take away many happy memories.

All my best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Watters Her Majesty's Inspector

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Her Majesty's Inspector