

# St Bridget's Church of England Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112271
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cumbria
<b>Inspection number</b>	325564
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Paul Lowery

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	125
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mark Nicholson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lisa Hemingway
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Brigham Cockermouth Cumbria CA13 0TU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01900 325936

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 June 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	325564

**Fax number**

01900 325937

<b>Age group</b>	3-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an additional inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a small primary school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average, while the proportion with a statement of special educational need is above average. The Early Years Foundation Stage is provided across two years in a Nursery class followed by a Reception class. A voluntary committee of parents provides a breakfast club and afternoon care facility for two to four-year-olds and an after-school club for children aged two to eleven. This was inspected separately by Ofsted.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Bridget's is a good school and one that is making rapid improvements in all aspects of its provision. Achievement is good and pupils' progress is continuing to improve throughout the school. They join with standards that are broadly average, although writing skills are below expected levels. The introduction of new strategies to improve writing has had a positive impact, particularly on Years 5 and 6 pupils. In Years 1 to 4 the standards are rising more slowly for some pupils. Currently, Year 6 pupils are well placed to attain overall above average standards in national tests for English mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They have a good attitude towards learning, behave well in class and show a high level of consideration towards supporting each other. The school's Christian ethos underpins its approach to learning and this is reflected in pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils feel they receive good advice on staying healthy, but say they would welcome more opportunities to contribute their ideas to the school's future development. Although attendance is broadly average, there are signs that rates are falling.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Strong relationships between staff and pupils are reflected in the calm and purposeful atmosphere. A high level of additional adult support is effectively provided for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities including those with a statement of special educational need and as a result they make good progress.

A good curriculum effectively meets the needs of learners. The increased focus on developing literacy skills through the whole school approach to writing is starting to raise literacy levels amongst older pupils. However, a small number of younger pupils are still not making sufficient progress in writing. Good provision for personal, social and health education, together with a strong enrichment programme, is helping pupils become confident learners.

Pupils receive a good level of care and support. They feel safe in school and are confident that there is always an adult available to talk to if needed. Responsibilities for safeguarding are a high priority and all statutory requirements are met. Appropriate levels of support are provided on how pupils can improve their work, although guidance on National Curriculum levels of attainment is stronger in Years 5 and 6 than for younger pupils.

Leadership and management are increasingly effective in providing good direction and a vision of what can be achieved. There is a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses and appropriate priorities are identified for further improvement. Subject leadership is being strengthened, which is helping to raise standards across subject areas. Governors are clear about what needs to be done and hold the headteacher to account. The school has good capacity for further improvement. Effective partnerships with local schools, external agencies and the local community, underpin the provision of good education at the school.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

Children enter the Nursery class with skills and knowledge that are broadly typical for their age. By the end of Reception, standards are average for most areas of learning and above average in social development and spoken language skills where more children reach higher levels. For a minority, reading and creative skills are less well developed. Effective and well-planned teaching supports children to make good progress. Appropriate emphasis is being

placed on letters and sounds and success can be seen in the improvement in their communication skills. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. All welfare requirements are met and children receive a good quality of care. Children learn in a secure environment, both in and out of the classroom, with attentive supervision by adults. Children relate well to each other and cooperate in sharing resources and their learning. Despite limitations on space, appropriate provision is made for learning both within and outside the classroom. Likewise, visits and visitors help to enrich the learning. The Reception class recently arranged a trip to the local seaside and children were using their experiences to good effect to extend their learning once they were back in school. Good communication is maintained with parents. Records showing children's progress and targets are regularly updated and shared with parents through the 'Bookmark' scheme. Good partnerships, including with health service staff, enable the school to provide information and further support to parents.

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

- Ensure that the emphasis on raising standards in writing has an impact on all groups of pupils, particularly in Years 1 to 4.
- Work closely with parents to improve attendance levels.
- Provide further opportunities for pupils to contribute to the decision making and development of the school.

### **Achievement and standards**

#### **Grade: 2**

Achievement throughout the school is good. Standards rise from broadly average at the start of Nursery to above average by the end of Year 6. Evidence from work, lessons and school assessments shows that pupils are making more rapid progress than previously as a result of the school's sustained efforts to improve. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils currently in Year 6 are clearly on course to attain above expected levels for English, mathematics and science in the 2009 national tests. The focus on improving literacy has led to accelerated progress in writing. The special writing initiative adopted by the school has particularly assisted older pupils in Years 5 and 6 to produce extended pieces of written work of a high standard. However, for small groups of pupils in Years 1 to 4, writing skills remain lower than average. Pupils' oral skills and language development are good. By the end of Year 6, those reaching the level expected for their age in English, exceeds that in mathematics or science. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special educational need receive effective support provided both internally and by local authority staff. As a result, these pupils are making good progress in line with that of their peers.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Considerable emphasis is placed on spiritual, moral and social development, and as a result pupils have an extremely clear understanding of what is right and wrong. They seek to help each other at every opportunity and this contributes significantly to their moral and social attitudes. Likewise, the Christian focus within the school facilitates very strong spiritual values. Behaviour is good and the relationships evident in the classrooms and in extra-curricular activities support good learning and cooperation. Cultural development is good and the school is increasingly providing opportunities to broaden pupils' understanding of different cultures. The improvement of school lunches has had a dramatic impact on the take up of school meals

and the choice of healthy options. High levels of participation in sport and physical education mean most pupils are adopting healthy lifestyles. However, a minority of pupils continue to eat less healthy foods at lunchtime. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about learning. They would welcome a greater say in discussing how the school can improve even further. Pupils' preparation for the future is good, in particular through the emphasis placed on raising literacy levels. Attendance overall is satisfactory, but there is some concern that absence rates for some families are starting to rise.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning throughout the school are good and as a result, pupils are making increasingly good progress in their studies. Teachers are particularly effective in developing pupils' oral skills. This is due to good questioning techniques and discussions in lessons such as in one science lesson where pupils were using a high level of technical language to describe water resistance. Lessons are delivered in a well ordered environment, praise is used appropriately to encourage good behaviour and teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge. As a result, pupils are confident in their learning. Pupils' work is carefully marked and guidance is given on how improvements can be made. Lessons are effectively planned. However, there is some inconsistency in how teaching assistants are deployed during whole-class teaching.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils have access to all aspects of the statutory curriculum. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used in all curriculum areas although the school recognises the need to further develop its access to online curriculum resources. Pupils use ICT with confidence both in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 and 2. There is a wide range of activities to enrich the curriculum, including trips and residentials, and these are greatly appreciated by pupils. A good range of after-school clubs are popular with pupils and participation rates are high. During the inspection a large number of pupils were taking part in an after-school orienteering activity.

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

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils receive good levels of care and support. In particular, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special educational need receive additional personalised support which assists them to make good progress. Procedures for safeguarding and child protection meet statutory requirements. Good systems are in place to monitor risk. Good communications underpin smooth transition support for children moving on from Reception to Key Stage 1. Good partnerships with the local secondary school provide similar transition support between Years 6 and 7. One Year 6 pupil particularly commented how confident she was to make the move to secondary school as a result of the visits she had already had with this school. Older pupils receive good academic guidance on their targets and how to make further improvements in their studies.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Considerable progress has been made since the last inspection in improving the provision and outcomes reached by pupils. This is a result of strong leadership provided by the headteacher and the common sense of purpose amongst the staff. One parent reported 'how fantastic the headteacher has been in moving the school forward over the last 18 months'. Challenging targets, high expectations and a culture of improvement are shared across the school. The school operates a strong inclusive policy to ensure equality of opportunity for every pupil. This is seen, for example, in the good support provided to those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school has placed an appropriate emphasis on strengthening subject leadership and this is improving its capacity to develop all aspects of the curriculum. Likewise, there has been a considerable focus on ensuring consistency, both in teaching and learning and in management systems. This, together with the close monitoring of effectiveness of initiatives, is contributing to the significant rise in the quality of provision. There are effective plans in place to further develop the school's promotion of community cohesion, especially within the school and amongst the local community. The school has already increased opportunities for developing pupils' understanding of cultural diversity and different lifestyles. Financial planning and the monitoring of budgets are rigorous and the school gives good value for money.



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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<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
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

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

**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/or disabilities make progress	2

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which 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	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

## 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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

15 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Bridget's Church of England Primary School, Cumbria, CA13 0TU

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and talking to me about your work. I noted how proud you are of your school. It is good to know that you feel safe and welcome the support you get from all your staff. Your school is providing you with a good education.

I found that your behaviour is good. Your willingness to help others and talk about right and wrong are outstanding. You are able to talk and think in a very mature way about spiritual matters. Your teachers work hard to make sure you do well in class, in particular supporting you with your writing. The staff are clear about your targets and give you advice on how you can improve your work. I noted that you were pleased with the range of clubs and activities you could take part in. Your school is well led and determined to continue to improve.

To help you do even better I have asked your headteacher and staff to:

- continue to help you to improve your writing especially in Years 1 to 4
- work with parents to ensure that everyone has good attendance at school
- find more opportunities for you to share your ideas about how to further improve the school.

You are certainly very keen to do well and I am sure that you will all continue to work hard. By everyone working together the school can continue to improve.

Good luck in your future studies.

Yours faithfully

Paul Lowery

Lead inspector