

## Bolsover Church of England Junior School

### Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112801
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	325691
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 June 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Stephen Walker

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	242
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Graham Milnes
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Rowena Herbert
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 May 2006
<b>School address</b>	Horsehead Lane Bolsover Chesterfield Derbyshire S44 6XH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01246 822324
<b>Fax number</b>	01245 822324

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Bolsover Church of England Junior School is similar in size to other junior schools. It serves the former coal mining community of Bolsover near Chesterfield. The school transferred into its new buildings on the eastern side of the town in 2006. The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds and there are very small numbers from minority ethnic groups. Most pupils start school with levels of knowledge and understanding that are in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils with a range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average, as is the percentage known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Activemark, Artsmark, the Bronze Eco Award and National Healthy School status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Bolsover Junior is a satisfactory school with some good features. It is undergoing a period of significant change that is bringing about improvements in the achievement and personal development of the pupils. The headteacher provides collaborative and forward-looking leadership so that there is a clear vision for continuous improvement and equal opportunities. Parents speak highly of the school and of the support for their children. Many praise the improved facilities in the new school and the positive changes made by the headteacher. One parent, typical of many, wrote, 'The school is very well managed and organised. I have been really impressed with how the school has developed over the last few years'.

Pupils make satisfactory progress. They enter the school with average attainments and leave with broadly average standards. However, a small proportion of pupils in Years 3 and 4 do not make enough progress. Targeted support for pupils who require additional help with their work is beginning to raise their levels of achievement. The school acknowledges the need to raise standards further and also rates of progress across the school in English, mathematics and science.

Care guidance and support is satisfactory overall. The good standard of pastoral care and guidance greatly supports the improvements in the school. There is a rigorous system for using assessment information to track pupils' progress in order to identify underachievement. However, target setting for individual pupils and marking of work is not consistent across the school and pupils do not always know what they have to do to improve their work. Pupils' personal development is good. Most pupils behave well and enjoy coming to school. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to take on responsibilities and are very proud of their school. Teaching is satisfactory with some examples of good practice. The school recognises the need to develop further the overall consistency and quality of teaching and learning. There is a positive learning environment and pupils want to do well. Curriculum provision is good and the more integrated programmes of study are enhancing the motivation and progress of the pupils.

Satisfactory leadership and management ensures self-evaluation is accurate, but actions to remedy weaknesses have not had time to be fully effective. Leaders are introducing new systems and these are beginning to improve teaching and pupils' progress although these are still inconsistent across the school. The school has good partnerships with the local community, external services and the infant and secondary schools. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion and encourages all parents and members of the community to feel welcome. The clear vision of the headteacher, the robust systems for tracking pupils' progress and the early indications of improvements in standards indicate that the school has a satisfactory capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the levels of attainment and rates of pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science, especially in Years 3 and 4.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning to ensure that all pupils make at least good progress.
- Ensure that there is a consistency in the setting of targets and marking so that pupils know what they have to do to improve their 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**

Pupils make satisfactory progress from their average starting points. By the time they leave the school, standards are typically broadly average. The 2008 national test results for Year 6 pupils in English and science were average and slightly above average in mathematics. Pupils' progress has improved over the last two years with particular improvements in English and mathematics. However, the progress of a small number of pupils in Year 3 and 4 is presently inadequate. The school has identified the development of writing skills as a key area for improving the rate of pupils' progress in English across the school. The rigorous tracking system for progress identifies underachieving pupils, who then receive effective support through a range of intervention strategies, such as small group work. Additional support for the large number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures that they make satisfactory progress. Evidence of pupils' work seen during the inspection and analysis of assessment records shows that most classes make at least satisfactory progress and a growing number of pupils are making good progress, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils value being part of a caring community in which they feel safe and secure. Positive attitudes and strong relationships are an important part of the school's success. Initiatives, such as playground pals make playtimes harmonious social occasions. Behaviour is always at least good in lessons, but sometimes over boisterous at lunchtimes, particularly in the dining hall. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Art is an important part of pupils' cultural growth in the school. Pupils are developing their awareness of the multicultural diversity of our society adequately. Most pupils enjoy school and have a very clear understanding of eating healthily and being active. They relish their increasing involvement in environmental issues, which provide pupils with good 'eco' awareness. The school parliament displays great maturity in its work, giving pupils a valued voice in decision making and improvements in the school. Pupils embrace opportunities to take responsibilities within school, such as parliamentary ministers, mini-leaders and monitors. The pupils raise money for a range of charities and make a good contribution to the local community through the church and local events. Attendance is improving and is now in line with national average. Pupils leave the school with adequate academic skills and good personal skills in preparation for secondary education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory but it varies considerably. Although rigorous monitoring has brought about improvement, the picture is by no means consistent. In the best lessons, teachers create excitement and interest. As a result, pupils display great enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration. They enjoy success. A small proportion of teaching is not effective enough, which has a detrimental effect on some pupils' learning, particularly in

Years 3 and 4. In lessons where teaching lacks focus and momentum, the pace is too slow to sustain pupils' interest. Occasionally, when teachers talk for too long, pupils become uninterested as they sit passively through lengthy periods of explanation. However, many teachers use information and communication technology very well to bring topics alive. Good displays in the classrooms and corridors provide a stimulating environment for learning. Planning is generally of good quality with clear learning objectives for each lesson. Much of it is detailed and pays good attention to ensuring activities meet pupils' needs. Some teachers use assessments of previous learning very effectively to match work to the ability of individual pupils. However, this does not happen in all classes. Marking is variable across all year groups and not all pupils are well-informed about how to improve their work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory but it varies considerably. Although rigorous monitoring has brought about improvement, the picture is by no means consistent. In the best lessons, teachers create excitement and interest. As a result, pupils display great enthusiasm and sustain high levels of concentration. They enjoy success. A small proportion of teaching is not effective enough, which has a detrimental effect on some pupils' learning, particularly in Years 3 and 4. In lessons where teaching lacks focus and momentum, the pace is too slow to sustain pupils' interest. Occasionally, when teachers talk for too long, pupils become uninterested as they sit passively through lengthy periods of explanation. However, many teachers use information and communication technology very well to bring topics alive. Good displays in the classrooms and corridors provide a stimulating environment for learning. Planning is generally of good quality with clear learning objectives for each lesson. Much of it is detailed and pays good attention to ensuring activities meet pupils' needs. Some teachers use assessments of previous learning very effectively to match work to the ability of individual pupils. However, this does not happen in all classes. Marking is variable across all year groups and not all pupils are well-informed about how to improve their work.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Arrangements for pastoral guidance are good. Robust procedures for safeguarding pupils meet statutory requirements and underpin the school's caring approach. The range of procedures to support pupils and their families is good. The good working relationship between the school and external agencies benefits pupils and ensures their social and learning needs are met through well-planned and effective support programmes. This extra input, combined with effective support from teaching assistants, raises the self-esteem and confidence of pupils who find learning difficult. The learning mentor has played a key role in raising levels of attendance in the school. Academic guidance, though satisfactory, is not as strong. The tracking of pupils' progress has been refined and improved in recent years. It is starting to become more firmly embedded in teachers' planning and assessment. However, not all teachers use information about pupils' progress and targets in a consistent enough way. Consequently, pupils do not always have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve or whether they are making enough progress.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The headteacher provides strong leadership, enabling staff to work together on the continuous improvement of the school. She is very clear about the areas for development. The assistant headteacher and other leaders are providing a strong impetus for improvement across the school. New systems of monitoring and higher expectations are beginning to raise standards. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive working document with clear actions and targets, which are particularly focused on improving teaching and learning. The core subject leaders are increasingly effective in their planning, supporting and monitoring roles. However, other subject leaders are not fully involved in the monitoring of teaching and work across their areas of responsibility. There is a good programme of professional development for teachers and support staff. Nevertheless, the school recognises that more effective training is required for lunchtime supervisors. Governors are well informed concerning the school's progress and areas for development. They are becoming more involved in the monitoring progress, in holding the school to account and developing community cohesion initiatives. The school is setting challenging targets to raise standards. It is taking appropriate steps to remedy weaknesses and there are positive signs that these are beginning to improve standards. However, there are still inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and the progress of the pupils.



## 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	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	3

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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	2
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	3

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	3
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?	3

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

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

5 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Bolsover Church of England Junior School, Bolsover, S44 6XH

Thank you for making us so welcome and talking to us during the inspection. We really enjoyed watching your lessons and looking at your work. It was also good to see you in the assembly and during playtime. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and provides a satisfactory standard of education. We know that your parents and carers are pleased with the school.

Here are some positive features of your school.

- You feel safe and happy at school.
- Most of you behave well and take care of one another.
- Many of you readily take on responsibilities within the school.
- The curriculum provides you with good opportunities for learning.
- The headteacher, teachers and support staff take good care of you.
- The school is very welcoming to all pupils and parents.
- There are many extra activities and school trips, which you enjoy.
- Your new school is very tidy and the classrooms are very attractive.

We have asked Mrs Herbert, the staff and the governors to do the following things to make the school even better:

- help you all to gain even better results in English, mathematics and science
- help staff to improve further their teaching skills and to share their ideas to help you all make the best possible progress
- make sure that your subject targets and teachers' marking show you more clearly how to improve your work.

Keep working hard and enjoying the many things you do at Bolsover Junior School. We would like to wish you success in your future education.

Best wishes

Stephen Walker

Lead inspector