

# St Benedict's Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123833
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	328001
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 October 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Goodchild

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	231
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Derek Dorey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christopher Lewis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	28 September 2008
<b>School address</b>	Benedict Street Glastonbury BA6 9EX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01458 831811
<b>Fax number</b>	01458 832261

---

<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 October 2008
<b>Inspection number</b>	328001

---

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

St Benedict's is a junior school in the centre of Glastonbury. The number of pupils joining the school over the school year is above average as is the proportion of pupils identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities when they join the school. The number of pupils on roll has fallen since the last inspection.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

St Benedict's is a good and improving school. It has effectively addressed the key issues identified in the previous report, particularly writing, and there is good evidence that this improving trend is continuing. Effective leadership and management have been instrumental in bringing this about. Strong features of the school are the values it promotes and its friendly atmosphere and welcome for pupils from a range of backgrounds. The school provides good care, support and guidance, and the commitment to the pastoral care of pupils is evident in the increasing involvement of support agencies and the recently established nurture group to support vulnerable children. The school works hard to ensure good attendance and offers support to families who are experiencing difficulties. The curriculum is good and contributes effectively towards the good progress that children make and their good personal development and well-being. By the end of Year 6 pupils' attainment is above the national average and, in relation to their different starting points, achievement is good overall. Children enjoy school and speak with enthusiasm about the Extravaganza Showcase, sports festivals and other enrichment activities the school provides. The school increasingly seeks to involve parents in the education of their child and runs successful 'Inspire Workshops' each annually to introduce a range of subjects, and offer tools to help parents support their children's learning.

The standard of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and inspection evidence supports the school's judgement that it is now good. This is because of the increasingly effective use of assessment information to inform whole school planning and the support of external advisors. However, the school recognises that the cycle of monitoring teaching and analysis of assessment data, although effective, could be more frequent in order to refine further current planning and maximise pupil progress. Teaching is particularly strong in the upper school where pupils make rapid progress. However, progress across the school is uneven, particularly in mathematics, where a small minority of pupils struggle to understand basic mathematical concepts. The school evaluates itself well. It has recognised the need to change the type of interventions and broaden the range of teaching strategies, particularly in mathematics, to ensure that progress is more consistent across the school.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Evaluate the quality of teaching and analyse assessment data more frequently so that planning can be further refined to maximise learning.
- Increase the range and variety of teaching and intervention strategies to ensure that pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics, is consistent across the school.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Standards on entry to the school are broadly average. Achievement is good and pupils make good progress over their time in school relative to their various starting points. They achieve standards above the national average. The weaknesses in literacy, particularly writing, identified at the previous inspection, have been addressed and inspection evidence supports the school's assessment data that writing has improved and continues to improve. Pupils make more rapid progress in Years 5 and 6, where teaching and learning strategies are consistently effective, than they do in the rest of the school. Scrutiny of the school's assessment data, together with other inspection evidence, shows that the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels has

increased over the past year and that this is a continuing trend. This is because the school is increasingly successful in challenging the most able pupils. However, progress is uneven across the school, particularly in mathematics, where a small minority of pupils struggle to understand basic mathematical concepts. This is because teaching and learning strategies, including intervention strategies, do not always fully meet individual needs. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well compared with their starting points.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are happy; they enjoy their lessons and coming to school. The school has a friendly atmosphere in which all pupils feel valued. The values the school promotes ensures that pupils treat each other with courtesy and respect and are tolerant of differences. Behaviour is good and pupils demonstrate good attitudes towards their studies and towards each other. The school works hard to ensure pupils come to school regularly and attendance is good. Pupils say that the Playground Friends make a significant contribution to making them feel safe and secure, and help them to overcome difficulties in making social relationships with each other. Opportunities for younger pupils to play an active role in the school are more limited. There are strong links with the local community and other schools, and children take part in a range of activities such as performing arts and sports festivals as well as celebrations at local churches. Through their fund raising activities they are developing an increasing awareness of life in the wider community. The summer and Christmas fairs are organised by Year 6 pupils who work together to prepare a mini-business plan to ensure they make a profit. These activities, together with pupils' good academic progress, enable pupils to make good progress in developing relevant workplace skills. Pupils display a good understanding of the importance of eating well and staying active in order to develop a healthy lifestyle. The opportunities provided by the Sports Partnership to 'taste' a range of sports contributes significantly to this.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching has a number of strengths. Pupils make good progress overall and particularly strong progress in Years 5 and 6. Teachers relate well to their pupils and there is a positive learning atmosphere in each class. This ensures that pupils stay focused throughout lessons and enjoy learning. Questioning is often effectively used to check pupils' understanding and clarify their thinking. There is a good focus on helping pupils understand what they are going to learn at the start of each lesson. Sometimes the pace of lessons slows and this reduces the opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own learning. Teachers use a variety of strategies, including the good use of practical resources, to support learning. However, on occasions the range of strategies used in teaching younger pupils in particular does not fully meet their needs. Pupils sometimes lack the confidence to work independently, especially in mathematics, and as a result the pace of learning slows. Teaching assistants support teaching and learning well and provide effective support for individuals and groups of pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, in reading and writing.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Since the last inspection, there has been an increased emphasis on developing pupils' learning and enjoyment through first-hand meaningful learning experiences. Visits, such as to the Victorian museum, the introduction of French, the wide range of visitors, and the good variety of extra-curricular activities are all very popular and enhance the curriculum well. Consequently, the curriculum successfully promotes pupils' personal development and awareness of the local community. Good opportunities to improve their reading and writing skills, together with increased links with other subjects, have led to an improvement in pupils' basic literacy skills. Pupils with particular gifts and talents are provided with additional challenges that effectively enhance their learning. However, the school recognises that planned opportunities for learning are not sufficiently varied in all year groups, especially regarding mathematics. Curriculum workshops are held for parents and carers that benefit both pupils and parents who state that they 'provide them with a better understanding of learning expectations'.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides high quality care and good guidance and support. Staff are highly committed to the pastoral care of children and to their well-being. A parent support officer plays an important role in linking with parents and external agencies to help pupils make good progress both in their personal development and their learning. The 'Inspire' workshops give parents and carers the opportunity to understand what their children are learning and how best to support them in their studies. The use of assessment data to identify children who are not making the expected progress has become more effective since the previous inspection. Intervention programmes have been effective in raising achievement by the end of Year 6, although the school acknowledges that more needs to be done regarding such provision. Many pupils join the school throughout the school year and they settle well. They are not assessed formally when they arrive to see the level they are working at to ensure continuity and progression in their education. The academic guidance that pupils receive is good, particularly in literacy, where they know their targets and where marking helps them to take the next steps in learning. However, this good practice is not yet fully developed in other subjects.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher provides a strong, caring leadership. He has successfully empowered his staff to implement a number of effective changes. The senior leadership team work well together and have improved the curriculum since the last inspection, so pupils are making better progress. The increased use of assessment data and targeted intervention strategies have also contributed to the good progress pupils now make. The school knows itself well. The monitoring of teaching and learning enables the senior team to identify strengths and provide support where needed. This has successfully improved the quality of teaching and learning. However, the school recognises that more regular, sharply focused lesson observations would provide an even better vehicle to ensure that best practice is shared and developed even further. The school now has a lot of data at its fingertips which it analyses carefully twice a year to set challenging targets and inform school development planning. However, the current system is time consuming and

this limits the opportunity to analyse the progress pupils make on a more regular basis to ensure that planning can be refined more frequently to further enhance learning. The governing body have developed their skills well. They visit regularly and are now more confident to act as critical friends. Co-operation between groups within school and links both locally and wider afield ensure that pupils have a good understanding of their own and other communities. Staff are working hard to continue to improve their practice. Everyone shares the same determination at St Benedict's to do their best for the pupils.

**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](http://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?	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

**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/or disabilities make progress	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.

## 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	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

<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**

3 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Benedict's CofE VA Junior School, Glastonbury, BA6 9EX

We really enjoyed coming to your school and talking to you. Thank you for making us both welcome and telling us what you really enjoyed about your school. We feel that St Benedict's is a good school and it is clear that it will continue to improve. You all felt that you were making good progress in your learning, particularly those pupils in Years 5 and 6, and we agree with you. You told us that at times you were given extra help with your work and you found this helpful. You were particularly pleased with all the extra activities that you took part in such as the sports festival and Extravaganza performance.

We agree with you that the school has provided a rich range of activities that support your learning and personal development well. Your teachers do a good job of teaching you and this contributes towards the good progress that you are making. We found you respectful and courteous to all the staff and each other and your behaviour is good.

To make your school even better we think more regular observations of teaching and checking your progress would help you to achieve even better. We feel that younger pupils in particular need to be helped more to improve their understanding, especially in mathematics.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Yours sincerely

Judith Goodchild Lead inspector