

Worcester, St Barnabas CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116858
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	338908
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Peter Kerr

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	417
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Morrison
Headteacher	Angela Deakin
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2007
School address	Green Lane Worcester Worcestershire
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 15

- lessons, and 15 teachers were seen teaching. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at school policies, monitoring files, records of pupils' progress and 85 parental questionnaires. Discussions were held with groups of pupils, governors, and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- whether pupils make consistent progress through the school
- how well the school identifies what needs to be done to improve teaching
- how successfully the school promotes awareness of cultural diversity.

Information about the school

This is a large primary school. It takes pupils from a wide area and most are of White British heritage. A very small minority speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average, as are the proportions with special educational needs and/or disabilities and with statements of special educational needs. The school holds the Arts Mark (Gold), Basic Skills Quality Mark, ICT Mark, Football Charter Mark, ActiveMark and Eco Green Flag.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Though satisfactory, the school has improved significantly over the past year. This has been due in large part to the establishment of a dynamic leadership team that has brought a renewed sense of purpose to the school's work.

Standards are below average on entry to the school. Well managed provision enables children to make good progress though the Early Years Foundation Stage so that levels of attainment are only slightly below average by the end of Reception. Progress is satisfactory through Key Stages 1 and 2 and standards are average at the end of Year 6. Standards in writing lag behind those in reading and mathematics, but are beginning to improve. Outcomes in pupils' personal development are good. Pupils feel safe throughout the school, behave well and develop self-confidence. Their good information and communication technology (ICT) skills and ability to work independently and collaboratively prepare them well for secondary school and the world of work.

All teachers plan lessons meticulously and prepare different activities for different ability groups. However, some lessons are not as challenging as they could be because planning does not focus sufficiently on key learning skills such as problem-solving in mathematics and putting forward and testing ideas in science. In the best examples, teachers adapt lessons to pupils' responses as they progress to broaden and extend learning. In weaker lessons, the original plan dictates proceedings too closely. Teaching assistants often make a good contribution by supporting groups as well as individuals with their learning but, in some lessons, they help individuals to complete tasks rather than interacting with the pupils to develop skills. The curriculum offers a wide range of learning opportunities, including good channels for pupils to develop drama and music skills, recognised by the Arts Mark (Gold) award. The personalised learning logs, in which pupils record their research and investigations at home, contribute strongly to their enthusiasm for learning and ability to write at length. The school supports vulnerable pupils well. It works closely with families and outside agencies to encourage them to participate and succeed. The percentage of persistent absentees, for example, has been significantly reduced, giving those pupils affected a real boost to their educational opportunities.

The headteacher and chair of governors have maintained the school's welcoming and inclusive ethos through recent significant staff changes. This has helped the current management team of new and well-established staff to quickly bond together and start to have an impact. Rigour has been brought to the school's self-evaluation and monitoring, which had previously focused too much on aspects of provision and insufficiently on outcomes for pupils. Main areas for development have been identified and leaders demonstrate the capacity to address them and to ensure sustained

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improvement. Governors fulfil all statutory duties well and offer real challenge as well as support to the headteacher. The school does much to promote community cohesion locally and has developing international links, but governors are aware that insufficient attention has been paid to cultural and religious diversity within the United Kingdom.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by ensuring that:
 - lessons are planned to develop pupils' skills across the ability range
 - teachers adapt lessons as they proceed to build on pupils' responses
 - teaching assistants are consistently deployed to best effect.
- Make leadership and management more effective in improving the quality of learning by:
 - focusing all monitoring more closely on the development of pupils' skills
 - giving teachers clearer guidance on what is needed to improve
 - ensuring that high expectations for pupil outcomes are met.
- Improve the school's contribution to community cohesion by:
 - making ethnic and religious diversity within the United Kingdom more central to policy development
 - linking evaluation of the school's actions to the impact on outcomes for pupils.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 Inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment had been below average until this year in Key Stage 1 because more able children did not make enough progress. This has left pockets of underachievement in Key Stage 2, especially in writing. The range and quality of writing in the pupils' learning logs show that standards are now improving across the school, but tracking shows that they still lag behind those in reading and mathematics. Progress is good in Key Stage 2, but better in some classes than in others. The best learning was seen when pupils were encouraged to collaborate, think for themselves, and discuss the next stages in their learning. In these lessons, teachers and teaching assistants interacted with pupils to good effect. Progress was weakest when pupils completed tasks that did not engage their interest or extend their learning skills, and teaching assistants mostly supported individuals. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress on the whole. Those with the most pressing needs make good progress because of the focused help they receive from beyond as well as within the school. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported well to learn English and make similar progress to their peers. There are no observable differences in achievement between boys and girls or pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.

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The pupils' spiritual and moral development is strong and they enjoy good relationships with each other and the staff. Their maturity and enthusiasm contribute well to learning. They collaborate effectively and are confident in expressing their ideas. They take a lively interest in their environment and, through the school council, contribute well to the improvement of the school site. For example, the work they have done growing vegetables is recognised in the Eco Green Flag award. They have a good awareness of some differences and similarities between cultures in different parts of the world, but only a limited knowledge and understanding of the diversity of religions and cultures represented within the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching in many classes in Key Stage 2 enables pupils to consolidate and extend their learning skills. This contributes strongly to improving achievement at the end of Year 6. A lively lesson was seen, for example, in which Year 6 pupils were engaged in discussions with staff about how best to review and plan their own learning in mathematics. Learning was also enhanced in Key Stage 1 when pupils were encouraged

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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to decide for themselves how to record their work in mathematics.

Improved assessment procedures have led to a closer match between lesson plans and pupils' existing levels of attainment. However, learning is restricted in some lessons because planning limits the scope for independent learning and collaboration.

Pupils enjoy school because of the good variety of activities provided in and beyond lessons, and many participate in after-school clubs. Learning logs motivate pupils to research and write at home as part of their learning in different subjects. This work reflects good cross-curricular links, particularly the confident use of ICT to aid research and present findings. This aspect of provision is recognised in the school's ICT Quality Mark.

Parents appreciate the way the school values individuals and ensures that their needs are met. The overwhelming majority of parents feel that the school keeps their children safe and all agree that it helps them to lead healthy lives, as evidenced by the Active Mark and Football Charter Mark. The school's Basic Skills Quality Mark reflects the work that it does with families to improve literacy and numeracy skills for adults, who are proud to come into the school to accept their certificates. Transition arrangements into, through and out of the school are very good and the school does its utmost to make sure all pupils, including the most vulnerable, are well supported in this process.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has maintained and promoted the school's Christian ethos and its good reputation in the community over a sustained period of staff changes at senior level. The previous report highlighted the need for evaluation to focus on how well pupils were learning. There is still some way to go to address this issue. Current lesson evaluations by the leadership team are sharper than previous examples but are not explicit enough about weaknesses, or sufficiently precise about exactly how teachers can best develop pupils' learning skills in their lessons. Nonetheless, the priorities identified by leaders reflect the school's current strengths and weaknesses and provide a clear pathway to sustained improvement. Good leadership in science has helped to raise standards considerably since the last inspection, particularly in investigative skills. Monitoring has been thorough in this area and steps for improvement clear.

The governors fulfil their duties well. They have challenged the headteacher to develop more effective delegation and supported her in achieving this through new

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appointments and re-allocation of responsibilities. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are comprehensively met and regularly reviewed and updated. Exemplary practice in Internet-safety, including the involvement of pupils in promoting it, is shared with other schools. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work and manifest in the way all pupils work happily together and participate fully in all activities. There are robust procedures to record and deal with racism, bullying or any discriminatory behaviour. The school's procedures for promoting community cohesion have been very effective within the school and local community and have led to useful international links. However, they have been insufficiently focused on ethnic, religious and socio-economic diversity, especially at the national level. Staff and governors are fully aware of this and already working towards a more focused action plan.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

A key strength in Reception is the good progress children make in their personal development. Their awareness of health and safety, for example, is exemplary. They become confident, independent learners who enjoy making their own decisions and working and playing with others. They behave exceptionally well and develop good relationships with each other and adults working with them. A good quality learning environment is provided indoors and outdoors, and learning often takes place in free flow between these areas. There is a clear focus on purposeful play and exploration with a balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Adults generally interact well with children as they play and keep good assessment records that feed into daily planning. On occasions, children don't have enough guidance when they play to ensure

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that they all achieve a good balance between different activities. Leaders have high aspirations and a good overview of the provision. Rigorous monitoring and self-evaluation feed into good long and medium-term plans that are continually reviewed in the light of the children's progress. Highly effective partnerships with parents and carers, and with outside agencies, ensure that all the children's needs are met and there is a common sense of purpose underpinning the provision. Good preparation is made for children entering Reception, including specialised help for any children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good transition arrangements into Year 1 enable those children not yet achieving the learning goals to do so through focused play.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents expressed very positive views in the questionnaire returns. Very few expressed any significant reservations and all thought the school helped their children to lead healthy lives. Some commented that their children had made less progress in some classes than in others. Inspectors confirm that there is a need for more consistency in progress across the school. A small minority did not express a view on how well the school prepares their children for the future. Inspectors found that the school does well in this respect.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Worcester, St Barnabas CofE Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 85 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 417 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	54	37	44	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	56	66	28	33	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	46	42	49	2	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	48	39	46	1	1	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	49	58	33	39	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	58	31	36	5	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	54	39	46	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	46	37	44	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	54	37	44	1	1	3	4
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	40	47	40	47	3	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	37	44	42	49	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	49	58	34	40	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	66	27	32	0	0	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



25 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Worcester, St Barnabas CofE Primary School, Worcestershire, WR3 8NZ

My colleagues and I enjoyed our visit to your school. You made us feel very welcome and were confident and polite when you spoke with us. We found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education and that you do a lot of things well. You behave well and enjoy working together, especially when you find the work interesting. You know what you need to do to stay safe and lead healthy lives and do your best to improve your environment. You know quite a lot about the school you link with in Tanzania, but you do not have such a good knowledge of the different backgrounds of many other children in the United Kingdom. You do well in reading, mathematics and science but not as well as you could in writing. Your learning logs are helping you to get better at writing. We were very impressed with the amount and quality of the work we saw in these, including your imagination and illustrations and the way you use ICT. Many of your lessons are interesting and challenging but others are not as good at getting you to work to your potential. Your teachers look after you well, especially those of you with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and provide a lot of interesting things for you to do outside lessons. We have asked your teachers to do a few things to make your school even better. These are:

- make sure more of your lessons help all of you to work independently and develop and use your skills
- help teachers to learn from each other about what helps you most in your learning
- give you more opportunities to learn about all the various backgrounds of people living in different parts of the United Kingdom.

We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Kerr

Lead inspector

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