

St Bartholomews Church of England Primary School Aided

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108615
Local Authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	324804
Inspection dates	19–20 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Mr Gordon Potter

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Colin Thomson
Headteacher	Mrs Gillian Surtees
Date of previous school inspection	7 March 2006
School address	Front Street Longbenton Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne and Wear NE12 8AE
Telephone number	0191 2007466
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school, which serves an area of social advantage. However, pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with a statement of special educational need, is average. The school has the Healthy Schools Award and Activemark. Fewer children leave or join the school during the school year than is usual. Children enter the Nursery class of the Early Years Foundation Stage in the autumn term following their third birthday. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery and Reception class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good and improving school. Pupils have good personal development and achieve well because they are well cared for and teachers enthuse them with a range of interesting learning activities. Most parents support the school and the way it encourages their children to develop care and appreciation for others in accordance with its Christian values. One parent summed this up by writing, 'The Christian ethos and the good teaching help produce happy, healthy and clever children. The care and attention they receive helps them to grow and mature. They enjoy learning because of the inspiration, motivation and dedication of the staff.'

Pupils engage in a range of exciting learning activities which are well matched to their abilities and which offer them many opportunities to learn together. Teachers use questions well to encourage pupils to develop their ideas. Occasionally, they miss opportunities to allow pupils to discuss ideas first with their friends. Some strengths in learning are the way pupils can focus on independent tasks and take pride in their work, and the way teachers increasingly encourage pupils to develop their writing skills in subjects other than English. Good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching makes clear to pupils what they will learn and how well they have learned it. Daily on-going marking offers pupils good advice on how to improve individual pieces of work. However, pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of the national curriculum level at which they are working and how to reach the next level, especially in mathematics.

Although cohorts vary across time, children enter the Nursery with skills which are typically in line with or slightly above what is expected for their age. Test results at the end of Year 6 are typically above national averages and represent good progress for pupils. However, in 2008, while results in English were well above average, results in mathematics were average and represented satisfactory progress for these pupils. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that initiatives to improve standards in mathematics have had an impact and pupils currently in Year 6 are working towards achieving challenging targets, linked to above average standards. Pupils make good progress across school.

Good relationships and sensitive support from a caring staff promote good levels of personal development. Pupils know that there is always someone to turn to if they need help. Attendance is good. Pupils' behaviour is good and contributes to their enjoyment of school. Pupils readily take on responsibilities, such as being school council members or helpers of younger children. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to keep healthy and stay fit because the school strongly promotes these aspects. The school's strong focus on pupils' personal development and enhancing their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) gives them a good preparation for their future economic well-being. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is based on the school's commitment to developing pupils' awareness of local culture, the arts and the importance of faith in people's lives.

Leadership and management are good. The excellent leadership of the headteacher, well supported by the senior leadership team, ensures that the school has a very

clear understanding of strengths and what needs to be done to improve further. Staff work together extremely closely to ensure that the needs of individual pupils are met. Governance is good because governors strongly support the school, have close links with individual classes and offer challenge to raise standards further. Based on the improvements made since the last inspection and the clear focus on initiatives which have improved target-setting procedures and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, the school has good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage **Grade: 2**

While cohorts vary, children currently enter the Nursery class with skills which are typically in line with what is expected for their age. Pupils currently in Year 1 left the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills which were broadly average and this represented satisfactory progress from their starting points. Evidence seen during the inspection shows that children currently in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress because teaching and the range of learning experiences are good. While the Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed by the Year 2 teacher, leadership is good as she coordinates the planning, manages the data and oversees the transition of children into Year 1. Teachers have developed a clear view of how pupils learn, use clear assessment procedures and plan together well to ensure that work is well matched to the needs of children. The balance between child-initiated and teacher-led activities is developing, although the range of activities which children choose for themselves is limited. Good developments to the outdoor provision have enabled seamless access to well-resourced learning areas. Children are very well nurtured and their health, safety and happiness are of paramount importance. This helps them to settle quickly into school and to develop the confidence to learn and play together. They thrive on role-play and investigation; for example, they were thrilled when they discovered a centipede in the garden. Teachers take account of parents' views and keep parents very well informed of their children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils know exactly the level at which they are working and how to reach the next level, especially in mathematics.
- Further develop the range of child-initiated activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Strengthen provision for promoting community cohesion.

Achievement and standards **Grade: 2**

Standards are above average and achievement is good. Pupils enter the school with skills which are broadly in line with or slightly above national expectations. Results in the 2008 tests at the end of Year 2 were above average overall and in reading and writing. Pupils made good progress in English. However, standards in mathematics were broadly average, representing satisfactory progress for these pupils. Results in the 2008 tests at the end of Year 6 were above average overall and in English they were well above average. Results in mathematics were broadly average. This

represented good progress for these pupils, except in mathematics where progress was satisfactory. Evidence seen during the inspection indicates that improvements to the teaching of mathematics have resulted in pupils making good progress across school. Pupils currently in Year 6 are well placed to achieve challenging targets and reach above average standards. This represents good progress for these pupils when their starting points are taken into account. Pupils achieve highly in the arts and sport because of the strength of the school's commitment to these areas. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the good teaching and support they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school because they feel safe and secure. The school's Christian values help them care well for one another and appreciate one another's differences, showing concern for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils have a good understanding of other faiths and cultures and of the multi-ethnic make up of modern Britain. Their spiritual and cultural awareness is good because of their involvement in the life of the church and their enjoyment of activities in local history and the arts which develop their self-confidence. Behaviour in lessons and around school is good and pupils show keen interest in their learning. They are aware of the need to eat healthily and to take regular exercise, and they enjoy the many opportunities the school offers them to stay fit. Their enjoyment of school is good, because they enjoy the chance in lessons to explore and investigate. This is reflected in their good attendance. Pupils have many opportunities to take on responsibilities in school. For example, older pupils help younger ones in the Nursery and in Reception with their activities. Pupils make a strong contribution to the local community through work on the environment and through links with local churches and the fire service. Their confidence in group work and speaking and listening, allied to good skills in ICT and above average standards, prepares them well for the next phase of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

A sound structure and well-established routines in lessons ensure behaviour and relationships are good and pupils are able to work confidently and with great concentration. Work is matched very closely to pupils' individual needs and abilities, so that they are challenged to make good progress. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and create activities which hold pupils' interest. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils discussed the ways in which shapes might be changed when halved. Pupils of all abilities contributed, skilfully guided by the teacher. Indeed, the use of questions to encourage pupils to develop their thinking is a strength of teaching. Teachers encourage pupils to work responsibly, both individually and alongside each other, although they occasionally miss opportunities to allow pupils to share ideas with a partner. The special educational needs coordinator and teaching assistants work closely with teachers and contribute strongly to the learning of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These pupils are included fully in class activities and make good progress as a result.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

All groups of learners benefit from a wide and balanced range of activities in all subjects, and the work that pupils do is matched carefully to their abilities. Provision for ICT is good so that pupils develop skills in using programs that enhance and support learning. Strong provision for history, geography and religious education supports pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures and life in other countries, especially through links with a school in India. Pupils enjoy opportunities to learn French. A comprehensive programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education contributes strongly to pupils' good personal development. A strong focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, including an emphasis on developing pupils' writing skills in subjects other than English, helps to ensure that standards are high in writing and rising in mathematics. A strong programme of enrichment activities, including trips to Beamish museum and visits to an environmental residential centre, promotes pupils' enjoyment in learning. A diverse programme of extra-curricular activities, including a range of sporting and arts activities, is enjoyed by many pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

A strong sense of community, based upon clear Christian values, leads to high-quality care for pupils. Well founded and understood procedures, such as the 'worry boxes' and pupils knowing who they can go to with their problems, contribute to a climate where pupils are protected and supported. Their safety is given the highest priority and procedures related to safeguarding and child protection meet current requirements. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good support in school, which is enhanced by effective links with outside agencies. Provision is well planned and progress is carefully monitored, resulting in these pupils making good progress. Good transition arrangements are in place so that pupils are well prepared for their move to secondary school. Parents are well informed of their children's progress. Pupils value the information they are given about their progress through consistent marking. However, pupils lack a good understanding of how well they are achieving in relation to the National Curriculum levels, especially in mathematics, to help them develop an ability to assess their own work and reach the next level.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The well-respected headteacher has created a positive and caring learning environment. Based on good and clear self-evaluation, and ably supported by the senior leadership team, she has identified clear areas for improvement in the detailed school development plan. Skilful and sensitive development of middle leaders across the school has led to improvements in standards and to the quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Leaders at all levels have been made accountable for standards and now feel empowered to manage improvements across school. Data are used well so that lesson planning is focused on what pupils need to learn and on setting challenging targets; this has increased the rates of pupils' progress and raised standards in mathematics. Governance is good as governors strongly support the work of the school, offer challenge to raise standards and work closely alongside teachers to support initiatives. The school's commitment to community cohesion is satisfactory.

While governors have considered its implications, and implemented some strategies to promote community cohesion, clear procedures to monitor its impact are underdeveloped. Most parents support the work of the school and the way it cares for and supports their children.

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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?	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 effectiveness of boarding provision	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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

¹Grade 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

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 learners' needs?	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

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 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	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



21 May 2009

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School Aided,
North Tyneside, NE12 8AE**

On behalf of the team, thank you so much for making us welcome when we inspected your school. Your school is a good school. The staff care for you well. They help you to enjoy your learning because they make your lessons fun and challenging. Staff encourage you to know what you need to learn in each lesson and help you to know how to improve your work.

We think that you are a credit to the school. We were impressed by the pride you take in your work. You behave well and you look after one another admirably. You are polite and helpful and we enjoyed talking to you about your school. You told us that you look forward to coming to school because you enjoy your lessons and appreciate the activities the school provides for you, such as visits and sports activities. Your parents and carers like the school very much, especially the way in which your teachers care for you and help you to enjoy your learning.

The way your school is led and managed is good. Leaders and staff know what needs to be done to make the school better and their work is making the school become more effective for you. We have asked your school to do two things to make it even better.

- Make sure that you know what level you are working at and what you need to do to reach the next level.
- Make sure that the youngest children have more activities they can choose for themselves.
- Improve the ways it helps you to learn about people from other cultures and communities.

You can help by continuing to do your very best – as I am sure you will – and by continuing to attend regularly.

Thank you for all your help and I wish you every success in all you do in the future.

Yours faithfully

Gordon Potter
Lead inspector