

# St Barnabas CofE Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109174
<b>Local Authority</b>	South Gloucestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	309912
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Colin Lee

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	243
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jane Allinson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kenneth Carruthers
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	17 November 2003
<b>School address</b>	Poplar Close Warmley Bristol BS30 5NW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01454 862233
<b>Fax number</b>	01454 862235

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<b>Age group</b>	4-11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This school is of an average size where numbers on roll have fallen steadily in recent years, reflecting falling birth rates locally. The school currently has nine classes, which will reduce to seven in September 2009. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school is organised in single-age classes for all age groups plus mixed-age classes for Years 1 and 2 and Years 5 and 6.

## 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 school. Pupils achieve well in both their academic and their personal development. It is also a rapidly improving school that is reaping the benefits of the hard work of all staff in the drive and determination to speed up school improvement. They have been helped in this by good support from local authority personnel. The headteacher's clear picture of the priorities for improvement has led to a range of initiatives that, in the first instance, have focused on raising standards and improving pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science. Children's level of attainment when they start school is below that expected for their age. In the past, progress over time has been satisfactory at best and rates of progress have varied from year to year. This had an adverse effect on standards, which have fluctuated and, in many year groups, have been consistently below expected levels, particularly in mathematics and science. The measures to improve achievement have had a good impact. Standards in each year group are generally at least in line with the levels expected. In some cases they are higher, and most noticeably so in writing. Progress is now much more consistent than it was and achievement is good throughout the school. There has been exceptional progress this year by many pupils in Years 3 to 6. The school recognises that there is still work to do. Provision for more able pupils is inconsistent and their progress is only satisfactory in some classes.

The main reason for the improvement in achievement is good teaching and learning. Teachers make good use of the rigorous systems that are now in place for checking pupils' progress. Few pupils fall behind in their work but any that do are identified quickly and given the extra help they need. Most teachers use the information from assessments well to ensure that each stage of learning builds on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Senior leaders monitor teaching closely and their guidance is helping many teachers to become increasingly more effective. Pupils have a love of learning and work hard. They know the targets set for them to improve their basic literacy and numeracy skills, although these targets are sometimes too vague. This means that pupils do not have enough opportunities to measure their own success. Marking also varies in quality and so pupils are not always getting sufficient guidance on how they can improve their work.

The curriculum is broad and provides a satisfactory balance of learning opportunities in different subjects. There is strong emphasis on pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. This results in their good personal development and well-being, which is shown particularly in their enjoyment of school, their good behaviour and the way they look out for one another. Pastoral care has many strengths and reflects the school's impressive commitment to meeting the social and emotional needs of all pupils and their families.

Leadership and management are good. The school knows itself well and its self-evaluation judgements are accurate. The headteacher and senior leadership team work very well together in promoting improvement in all aspects of the school's work. They are supported very effectively by a good, well-informed governing body. The impact of recent initiatives is sufficient to show that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

The Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Thorough assessment of the children's level of attainment when they start at the school, aided by home visits, enables quick identification

of children's needs and they make good progress from the outset. This is captured in their 'Watch me learn' portfolios, which involve parents well in their children's learning. The children flourish in the vibrant, stimulating atmosphere in the classroom. The good curriculum provides a wealth of learning opportunities that are taught well and the provision benefits from strong leadership. The school recognises that the outdoor area needs further development to provide more opportunities for imaginative play and exploration.

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

- Develop the curriculum to more effectively meet the needs of all learners, especially more able pupils.
- Increase the effectiveness of guidance to pupils on how they can improve their work by removing inconsistencies in the use of marking and target setting.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children's good achievement in the Foundation Stage means that most of them start Year 1 at a broadly average level in all areas of learning. Their progress is particularly good in personal and social development and mathematical development. By maintaining good progress throughout Years 1 to 6, most pupils are able to attain standards in English, mathematics and science that are at least in line with those expected in each year group. This is an improvement on the past, when there has been more variation in progress. An effect of this is seen in the pupils currently in Year 2, whose standards are slightly below the national average. This is due to slow progress in Year 1, when many of them experienced a lack of continuity in teaching. However, they have progressed well this year and nearly caught up to where they should be.

The whole-school priority on improving writing has been particularly successful in Years 1, 4 and 6, where standards are above expected levels. Other successes include the proportion of Year 6 pupils working at the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. This represents good progress by more able pupils in Years 5 and 6 but far fewer of the younger more able pupils are progressing as well.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Good relationships amongst the whole school community help pupils to become confident learners who enjoy school life. Pupils appreciate having a voice through the school council. This has led to improvements such as 'Friendship Stops' in the playground and a gardening club. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good and contribute to the happy atmosphere. Their attendance is good. Pupils learn and play well together and feel free from bullying. They know how to stay safe and what to do if they feel at risk. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, underpinned by the school's caring Christian ethos. Pupils' understanding of Britain as a culturally diverse community is satisfactory but underdeveloped. Most pupils know what makes a healthy and balanced diet and they understand well the importance of exercise. Older children develop some sense of responsibility in the school community, for example through helping younger children at lunchtime or sharing a reading book. Opportunities to take on responsibilities, develop independence and show initiative in other year groups are more limited. The pupils' broadly average skills prepare them appropriately for the future.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The continuous assessment of children's learning in the Foundation Stage is a key factor in their good progress. Other teachers are similarly carrying out regular checks of pupils' progress and ensuring that any pupils falling behind get extra support to help them catch up. All lessons start with clear explanations of what is to be learned. In some cases, teachers encourage pupils to evaluate how well they think they have achieved a learning objective but this does not happen often enough. Teachers work closely with the school's very able teaching assistants. This results in strengths in the provision for less able pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, helping these pupils to achieve well. Teachers generally maintain a good pace to their lessons and this creates a purposeful, working atmosphere. Pupils work hard, are never idle and their enthusiasm is an important factor in the good quality of learning in many lessons. Weaknesses in teaching are generally specific to individual teachers, and effective monitoring and guidance by senior staff are successfully increasing teachers' effectiveness. Greatest inconsistency is in the provision for more able pupils, due to some teachers having insufficiently high expectations of these pupils.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

There is satisfactory provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. However, the lack of challenge in some of the work planned for more able pupils means that the curriculum does not ensure that the needs of all learners are fully met in all classes. The curriculum is enriched by good provision for drama and sport, which has a high take-up and is greatly enjoyed. The good variety of after-school clubs supports pupils' learning across the curriculum and enhances their personal development. There is good use of educational visits, for example to an aquarium when studying sea life and to the Tutankhamun exhibition. Such visits widen personal experience and stimulate pupils to produce a good quality of work, especially in writing and art, back at school. Fundraising for local, national and global charities is used constructively to extend the curriculum through learning activities that explore the work of these charities. However, the curriculum as a whole is not used sufficiently well to develop multicultural education.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

The quality of care is outstanding. All staff are highly committed to raising pupils' self-esteem and promoting their health and safety. There are very good supportive relationships with parents, who value their partnership with the school. The school works well with outside agencies to provide good support for pupils with specific difficulties or disabilities. Statutory arrangements for the safeguarding of children and child protection are fully in place. Guidance for pupils on how they improve their work is inconsistent, as is seen in the varying quality of marking and use of target setting. Pupils are given targets for their learning in literacy and numeracy but these are often too broad and are not helpful or precise enough.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

The headteacher has a clear vision of where and how the school can improve. The senior leadership team has a positive impact on school effectiveness. Their checking of pupils' progress over time, by analysis of data from regular tests and assessments, is rigorous and is used well to identify groups of pupils requiring extra help. There is a strong focus on monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and teaching, both of which are improving, and in turn helping pupils' achievement to improve. From their observations, the literacy and numeracy leaders have a clear picture of standards across the school. Their analyses of strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work are being used effectively to guide staff on ways to raise standards. The school recognises that the role of foundation subject leaders needs developing in order to ensure that they acquire a more detailed picture of pupils' achievement and standards in their areas of responsibility.

Governors have a secure understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are supportive and have a strong commitment to the ethos of the school. They monitor thoroughly the progress in key areas of the school's improvement plan and use their findings to support and, where necessary, to challenge senior management so that, despite staff and organisational changes, there is a constant drive for improvement.

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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 the Foundation Stage	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	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### 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	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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.

## Annex A

**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 tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	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

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

9 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Barnabas C of E Primary School, Bristol BS30 5JX

Thank you for making us welcome in your school and for talking with us so willingly. We thoroughly enjoyed joining you in lessons and seeing you at work. We think your school gives you a good education. This is what we particularly appreciated.

- Children in Reception make a good start to their education.
- Nearly all of you are making good progress because you work hard.
- Your behaviour is good and this makes your school a friendly, pleasant place where you all care for one another.
- You understand well the importance of healthy eating and exercise, and about what are safe things to do at school and home.
- Teaching is good and teachers check your progress thoroughly to ensure you do not fall behind in any of your work.
- All the adults do a good job in looking after you and making sure that you are safe and get help whenever you need it.
- The school is led well by the headteacher, and all the adults, including the governors, are working hard to improve it.

We have two recommendations to help your school to get even better.

- Make sure you are all given appropriate work in different subjects, and those of you who find learning easy have work that is really challenging.
- Introduce more target setting to help you make better progress and use marking to give you more information about how you can improve your work.

We hope you will carry on enjoying learning and helping your teachers to make St Barnabas C of E Primary School an even better school.

Yours sincerely

Colin Lee Lead Inspector

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Lead Inspector