

St Stephen's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125187
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	359858
Inspection dates	30–31 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Prendergast
Headteacher	Lynne Gannon
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 13 lessons and observed seven teachers. Inspectors held meetings with pupils, staff with key responsibilities, members of the governing body and representatives from the local authority and the diocese. Inspectors observed the school's work and evaluated documentation such as policies, the school improvement plan, pupils' work and records of their learning and progress, and the school's safeguarding procedures. Inspectors analysed 59 completed questionnaires from parents and carers, 10 from members of staff and 32 completed by pupils in Key Stage 2.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage progress and their attainment at the end of Reception.
- How consistently well pupils develop their key literacy and numeracy skills across the school.
- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6, including that of the current Year 6, and the impact of teaching and learning on raising attainment.
- How effectively leaders at all levels evaluate the quality of the school's work and use this information to plan for future improvements.
- The capacity to improve as revealed in the impact of leaders' work on bringing about improvements in English and mathematics.

Information about the school

St Stephen's Church of England is slightly smaller than the average size primary school. It serves the local community and its surrounding area and has specialist provision for ten pupils with visual impairment. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average as is the proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or learning disabilities. The majority of these pupils have physical disabilities, speech and language and/or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A higher than average proportion has a statement of special education needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage children are taught in one Reception class.

• There have been substantial staffing changes in the last two years, especially at Key

Stage 2. The school was without a permanent deputy headteacher for the summer term in 2010. A permanent deputy headteacher took up post in September 2010. The school holds the Active Mark and an Eco-School award. There is a pre-school on site and there is also after-school provision but these are separately managed and were not included in this inspection.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?		
The school's capacity for sustained improvement	3	

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the attainment and achievement of pupils in mathematics.

The attainment of pupils in Year 6 is broadly average in English but, as a result of low attainment in mathematics for the last three years and for the current Year 6, pupils' achievement is inadequate. By Year 6, too few pupils reach average and higher levels in mathematics. Pupils often have gaps in their skills in mental arithmetic and are not sufficiently competent when tackling problems. Although pupils make satisfactory progress overall, this is not enough to raise their attainment in mathematics from a low base on entry to the end of Key Stage 2. However, successful action has secured pupils' good progress in reading throughout the school. Progress and attainment in writing are improving. Pupils can often write satisfactorily for different purposes, but spelling and punctuation are relatively weak aspects across the ability range and pupils' handwriting is sometimes untidy.

The school has a satisfactory capacity to improve because the impact of school leaders' work is evident in Reception and at Key Stage 1 where pupils make good progress. Consequently, pupils' attainment on entry to Key Stage 2 is average and much better than in the past. This is linked to leaders' efforts to improve the quality of teaching which, although satisfactory, is variable. For pupils in Reception and Key Stage 1, it is consistently better, especially in Year 2, because work is matched more accurately to their different capabilities than it is in Key Stage 2. Recent initiatives for improving mathematics at Key Stage 2, for example setting, have not yet had time to fully impact on attainment. Introductions to whole-class lessons, including mathematics, are sometimes too long and do not always cater for pupils' different learning needs. As a consequence, pupils' attention can wane and the work is too easy for a small minority and too difficult for others. Pupils do not always use time productively in group work when they are not given clear deadlines to complete their work. Although there is a satisfactory range of intervention programmes to help pupils catch up in mathematics, these are not accelerating their progress so well as those in English. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress and all, including those with visual impairment, are given every opportunity to take a full part in all aspects of school life. The latter group also make expected progress because they are supported effectively in discreet sessions which supplement the satisfactory support they get in mainstream lessons. The day-to tay management of the resource base for visually impaired pupils is secure within the overall whole-school structures.

Most parents and carers have confidence in the school and recognise it as a welcoming and caring place where pupils are kept and feel very safe. The school has strengths in the way in which all pupils are looked after. Procedures for pupils, whose circumstances make them more likely to be vulnerable, distressed or who have specific difficulties are particularly well managed and organised. Pupils say they enjoy school and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They behave well, come to school regularly and have a clear understanding of what makes a healthy lifestyle. They make a significant contribution to the school and wider community. A wide range of extracurricular activities enriches pupils' good personal development.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of what needs to improve. Self-

evaluation has enabled the school to accurately identify areas for improvement. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked and assessment systems enable leaders and staff to pinpoint how well different groups are achieving. However, arrangements for senior staff to evaluate the impact of initiatives are not robust. The school improvement plan does not show enough detail about how the school will monitor and evaluate the impact of initiatives on raising attainment. Staffing is now settled and leadership and management roles have recently been redefined. However, middle managers are still being trained to adopt a fuller role in observing teaching. Members of the governing body are well organised and hardworking but acknowledge the need for more training to help them evaluate pupils' attainment and progress more rigorously.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By March 2012, raise attainment in mathematics and writing by:
 - improving pupils' mental and problem solving skills in mathematics
 - improving pupils' spelling, punctuation and handwriting skills
 - increasing the number of effective intervention programmes to accelerate pupils' progress in mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- By December 2012, improve the consistency of good teaching and pupils' good learning and progress by:
 - making better use of assessment to ensure that all work is consistently matched to all pupils' abilities
 - ensuring lesson introductions are not overlong and giving pupils clear time deadlines so they work more productively during group work.
- By December 2012, ensure that all staff with leadership responsibilities focus rigorously on improving the academic outcomes for pupils by:
 - ensuring the school improvement plan shows clear monitoring and evaluation criteria, including attainment targets for different years
 - supporting middle leaders so they can skilfully monitor the quality of teaching to judge its impact on the learning of different groups
 - providing training for members of the governing body to enable them to assess attainment and achievement.providing training for members of the governing body to enable them to assess attainment and achievement.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

Adults' good relationships with pupils mean that learning takes place in a supportive classroom atmosphere. However, there are variations in the quality of pupils' learning across the school and this is acknowledged by senior staff. The school's tracking data, pupils' work and lesson observations show that progress is satisfactory overall. On entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's starting points are below the expected levels and good progress raises their overall attainment to those expected on entry to Year 1. Pupils' learning is good in Key Stage 1 and accelerates in Year 2 where teaching is stronger. In an excellent whole-class numeracy session on mental mathematics in Year 2, pupils responded extremely well to the teacher's quick-fire questions as they sharpened their skills in counting and calculating in twos. Pupils learned rapidly because the teacher's high level questioning matched their abilities, helping them to practise, solve problems and explain their thinking. However, there is not enough of this good learning across the school, especially at Key Stage 2 where pupils do not always work at a fast enough pace, particularly during group work.

Observations during the inspection showed that extra support accelerates the progress of those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with visual impairment. However, the level of the work is not consistently matched to the needs of these groups of pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons, and their progress, as with other groups of pupils, sometimes slows. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported well and incidents of poor behaviour are rare.

✤ Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and the strong community ethos enables pupils of all backgrounds to get on well together. Close links with the church help to promote pupils' spiritual and moral development. Regular opportunities to learn about different cultures through topics on for example, China and related festivals such as the Chinese New Year promote pupils' understanding of other cultural heritages. Pupils of all backgrounds engage in the many opportunities provided to take on responsibilities and to help the school make some decisions; for example, � they organise and promote

fundraising activities. They also help in the local community, for example when picking up litter in the village. Pupils' work on ecology is good and they gain first-hand experience of recycling and energy conservation and this reflects their achievement in gaining the Eco-School award. Pupils, including those with physical disabilities, are very keen to participate in the many sporting events and this is recognised in a national award. Pupils' preparation for the next stage of their schooling is inadequate because of low attainment in mathematics when they leave the school.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	4
Pupils' attainment ¹	т т
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	4
Taking into account:	2
Pupils' attendance 1	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers make learning relevant to pupils' daily lives. This was seen when Year 6 pupils wrote a persuasive letter to advise others how to 'Keep Britain Tidy' based upon their own experiences of caring for their environment. Teachers use the electronic whiteboards effectively to enthuse and motivate pupils and this, along with their use of successful strategies for managing pupils' behaviour, means that pupils are well behaved and interested in their work. Day-to-day assessment is effective in most lessons. However, during whole-class introductions, including in mathematics sets, opportunities for well-focused learning are missed because teachers' planning does not take pupils' starting points sufficiently into account. On occasions, teachers spend too long on instruction and questioning so the time pupils spend on their independent work is limited. Pupils are not always given clear enough guidelines for the amount of work expected in the time available and, as a result, a few do not work productively. Specialist support in withdrawal sessions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including for those with visual impairment and speech and language needs, is good but, like their peers, activities in everyday lessons do not always meet their needs.

The satisfactory curriculum is broad and stimulates cross-curricular learning. There are many examples of good quality practical work underpinning pupils' academic learning, for example in art and design on the theme of the 'Willow Pattern', before pupils create poems. The school has rightly identified that the build-up of pupils' writing skills, such as

handwriting and spelling are inconsistent across the school. A wide range of extracurricular and enrichment activities, including in sport, are popular and well attended by all groups, including those with physical learning disabilities. �

✤ Good support for pupils' well-being is a significant strength of the school and good pastoral care supports all pupils' learning. The way in which pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable or are in need are identified, monitored and supported is good. Specialist staff for the visually impaired pupils have a significant impact. This is because they are very knowledgeable about provision and have strong connections with other agencies. Rigorous procedures for encouraging good attendance are impacting well on improving the rates of pupils' attendance.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has developed a positive school ethos where teachers, pupils, and members of the governing body work in partnership and share a desire to improve pupils' achievement. She has worked hard to stabilise the school during the unsettled period of substantial staffing change. She has successfully introduced and developed suitable strategies to raise attainment in Key Stage 1 and in reading throughout the school. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has settled well and provides good support. The leadership team has recently been restructured but the new middle leaders have had little chance to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons to strengthen their evaluations of how well initiatives are impacting on pupils' progress. The school development plan focuses on the right priorities for raising pupils' attainment, including in mathematics, but does not show sufficiently challenging attainment targets for each year group or enough detail about how initiatives will be monitored. This hampers school leaders and staff in evaluating the impact of their work on raising attainment.

Members of the governing body are keen and are increasingly evaluative and proactive. Their prudent financial management has secured good budgeting and the school now has contingency savings. However, low attainment in mathematics over a prolonged period means the school does not provide value for money. �Safeguarding is prioritised and is firmly established in policies, working practices and the school culture. This is affirmed by the very large majority of those parents and carers who returned questionnaires and pupils' unequivocal view that they feel safe. There was no evidence of any forms of discriminatory behaviour at the time of the inspection. The success of the school's work in ensuring pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities take a full part in the

curriculum and similar rates of progress of different groups of pupils means that equality of opportunity is satisfactory.

• Partnerships are satisfactory and support the development of the broader curriculum;

however, they have yet to help bring about improvement in pupils' achievement in mathematics. The school works hard to involve parents and carers but is aware that a minority are not sufficiently engaged in supporting their children's learning. The school actively promotes community cohesion at local level and is currently developing pupils' understanding of cultures in different parts of the world and the cultural diversity in the United Kingdom.

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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children settle quickly into the Early Years Foundation Stage because of good induction processes and the good standards of care and safety which help children to feel happy and secure. Parents really appreciate this. Children's overall skills, knowledge and understanding on entry are a little below the expected levels because a minority have weaknesses in their speaking and listening skills. Children make good progress as a result of good teaching and learning. By the end of Reception, most children reach the expected levels for their age, including in literacy and numeracy. Attainment for the current Reception class is more even than in previous years and, in particular, children's attainment in reading is rising.

There is a strong focus on developing children's language, literacy, numeracy and personal skills through the provision of a broad, practical and interesting curriculum. Adults plan a good range of worthwhile and stimulating learning activities indoors and outdoors. Adults strike a good balance between more formal adult-led activities and those which children

select for themselves. Role play is well developed and both boys and girls love playing in 'The Three Bears' House' as they act out the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Free-choice writing areas include attractive word and phonics lists (which help with spelling) so children can readily draw on these when writing independently. This is supporting their development of writing particularly well. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to children's learning. Their skilled intervention accelerated children's mathematical development when, during water play, children found out how many yoghurt pots of water were needed to fill different containers.

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Careful checks are made on children's progress and assessment information is used well to ensure that work builds on previous learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	
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

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire were positive about the school and its impact on their children's learning and well-being. The majority who felt their children are kept safe and encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle. A few parents and carers expressed concerns that their children are not doing as well as they should and inspection evidence confirms this view. Although a small minority expressed concerns about the way pupils' behaviour is managed, inspection evidence indicates that pupils' behaviour is good and well managed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Stephen's 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 59 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 183 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	S Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	59	19	32	1	2	3	5
The school keeps my child safe	27	46	26	44	1	2	3	5
My school informs me about my child's progress	31	53	24	41	0	0	3	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	37	32	54	1	2	3	5
The teaching is good at this school	23	39	31	53	1	2	3	5
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	39	31	53	1	2	3	5
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	37	33	56	0	0	3	5
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)	15	25	36	61	1	2	3	5
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	37	32	54	1	2	3	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	15	41	69	4	7	4	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	19	41	69	4	7	4	7
The school is led and managed effectively	15	25	36	61	0	0	4	7
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	49	25	42	1	2	3	5

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

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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.

What inspection judgements mean

Overall effectiveness of schools

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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:	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.
	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 pupils' 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.

1 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Stephen's C of E Primary School, South Godstone RH9 8HR

Thank you very much for the friendly welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing you at work and play. Your school is a very caring one but it is not as good as it should be. This means we have given the school a 'notice to improve' particularly in relation to mathematics and other inspectors will come to check on how quickly your school is improving.

Here are some of the best things about your school:

- you make good progress in Reception and Key Stage 1 and in reading throughout the school
- you are looked after and cared for well
- you behave well and you are very helpful �
- the school makes sure that you all have the same opportunities to do things
- you feel very safe and know how to lead a healthy lifestyle.

To help your school improve more quickly we have asked your headteacher and senior leaders to:

- make sure more of you reach the levels you should in mathematics by the time you leave in Year 6
- help those of you in Key Stage 2 to improve your spelling, punctuation and handwriting
- improve teaching and learning so more is good or better to help you make good progress
- ensure school leaders, teachers in charge of subjects and members of the governing body keep a closer check on how well you are doing.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and you can help by working hard in all you do. • Well done for doing so much for the community. Please keep this up! •

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick Lead inspector



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