

St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Yetminster

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113781
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	357420
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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	157
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Judy Ferretter
Headteacher	Paul Miller
Date of previous school inspection	6 May 2011
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed eight teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils and spoke to a small number of parents and carers. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at analyses of pupils' progress, a sample of pupils' work and the governing body minutes, as well as development planning and monitoring, and a range of policies and procedures including those associated with safeguarding. They also scrutinised questionnaires returned by 80 parents and carers, 61 pupils and 13 staff.

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

- Attainment and progress in writing.
- The achievement of higher-attaining pupils and boys in the younger classes.
- The contribution of subject leaders to school monitoring and development.

Information about the school

St Andrew's is a small primary school in which some pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The headteacher joined the school in September 2010. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage with very few speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, although it varies significantly between year groups. These pupils' needs mainly relate to specific learning difficulties with regard to literacy. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. An above average proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than in Reception or Year 6. The school has been awarded Healthy School status and the Arts Goldmark and Bronze Eco-School awards. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are provided for in the Reception class.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

St Andrew's is a good school. Reception children get off to a good start and throughout the school pupils achieve well, with attainment in English and mathematics being above average by the end of Year 6. Following a dip in 2009, attainment has improved and is well placed to rise further. This is due to learning tasks that challenge pupils more effectively to ensure an increasing number exceed the levels expected for their age. Higher-attaining pupils now achieve as well as they should, most notably in writing, where very effective curriculum developments inspire all pupils to write at a higher standard than in the past. Improved assessment and tracking procedures help staff to keep a close check on different groups so that those pupils who may be at risk of underachieving, and boys in the younger classes, do as well as their classmates.

Teaching and learning have improved well over the past year and there is a greater consistency of good teaching across the school. Behaviour management and on-going assessment of pupils' work throughout lessons are particular strengths. Pupils' individual targets are used to good effect and older pupils are becoming skilled at evaluating their own work and improving on it without being asked. There are a few occasions, however, when lesson targets are too broad and do not always relate to the stage at which groups or individuals are working. Also, occasionally, teachers focus too much on the task pupils are given rather than the learning that is expected, or they give pupils too much direction on what to do. The curriculum is rich and motivating and links subjects together well so that pupils enjoy their learning and have a wealth of opportunities to use important skills such as writing. However, there is no consistent approach as to which calculation methods should be taught in mathematics and this confuses a few pupils, especially those who find learning difficult.

Pupils' welfare is at the forefront of this caring school's work so that pupils feel very safe and happy there, forging excellent relationships with staff and increasingly getting the best out of school life. Pupils are friendly, kind and thoughtful and behaviour is good. Community cohesion in the school and local area is very good and pupils develop a secure understanding of different societies elsewhere in the world, although their knowledge of diversity in United Kingdom society is limited. ♦

Since his arrival in September last year, the headteacher has gained the full confidence of staff and governors so that they form a strong team effectively focused on improving provision. Subject leaders are involved well in driving forward improvement, although their role in curriculum development is not yet fully established and some post holders are new to their role. Despite this, self-evaluation is accurate and development planning effectively targeted on weaker areas. Improvement over the past eight months has been rapid. There is a good awareness of what still needs to be done, with plans already in place and a

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strong determination to tackle this successfully. This, together with clear evidence of past success, gives the school a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by:
 - ? ensuring in mathematics lessons that there is a consistent approach to teaching calculation methods
 - ? placing more emphasis on what pupils are expected to learn
 - ? matching lesson targets more closely to the stage at which pupils are working.
- Build on and extend the contribution made by subject leaders by providing opportunities for monitoring curriculum planning and enhancing the skills of those new to their post.
- Improve community cohesion through extending pupils' knowledge and understanding of diversity in United Kingdom society.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The school prides itself on helping pupils to become well-rounded young people who are given the opportunity to develop their talents in all subjects or activities that the school has on offer. As a result, pupils are keen to attend school and develop a thirst for learning. They very much enjoy taking on responsibility as monitors or councillors, leading the daily 'Wake and Shake' sessions or enthusiastically contributing towards Eco-School status. Activities such as these help pupils gain a good awareness of how to live healthy and safe lifestyles.

There is no significant difference in the achievement of any group of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Above-average mobility makes it difficult to compare progress from year to year, but tracking data clearly show that progress in all year groups is good. Pupils' good achievements are evident in a range of subjects. A concerted effort to improve writing has seen a significant rise in attainment, with Year 2 pupils writing well-constructed stories based on interesting characters. By Year 6, pupils write effectively across a range of genres. In particular their descriptions of settings, for example in a rainforest or in the trenches of the First World War, are of an exceptionally high standard. Most Year 2 pupils develop good calculation skills, although the lack of a common approach to teaching these occasionally leads to confusion for a very few pupils. They work accurately in handling data and measures. By Year 6, pupils are skilled at choosing the most effective method to solve mathematical problems. Work undertaken, for example in classification in science, using PowerPoint presentations in information and communication technology and in producing a three-dimensional art display, also exceed the levels expected.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
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	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?

The curriculum is very well organised and has been very well tailored to pupils' interests so that pupils are consistently motivated and engaged. In the best lessons, their concentration is exemplary, although sometimes teachers spend too long giving directions so a few become restless. There is an excellent emphasis on practical activities to help pupils learn easily; for example, through making clay models of different organisms such as bacteria. Teaching assistants support learning well in most lessons, although occasionally they make little contribution during whole-class sessions. The raised level of expectations of what pupils can achieve and enhanced assessment and tracking procedures have helped improve the quality of learning for different groups of pupils, including for the higher attainers. However, medium-term planning does not sufficiently identify how this can be achieved. As a result, in a small minority of lessons, learning objectives do not relate closely enough to the next steps in learning for different groups. Detailed feedback throughout lessons is very good, with marking clearly showing pupils how to improve. The teaching of writing has brought about much-improved attainment, with the school now turning its attention to ensuring a more consistent approach in the teaching of mathematics. Art is exceptionally well taught, reflecting the Goldmark, as is science in the older classes. Pupils very much value the wide range of extra-curricular activities on offer.

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The school provides a very welcoming and caring learning environment. Recently improved procedures for supporting pupils at risk of underachieving ensure they increasingly reach or exceed their expected attainment levels. Updated policies related to their care and support are good, although detailed record keeping is not yet fully in place. Parents and carers are very happy with transition arrangements for Reception children, and the care provided by the breakfast club.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
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 been especially successful in communicating his high expectations to staff and the governing body so that they support him effectively in driving forward improvement. Their involvement in self-evaluation and monitoring ensures they are well focused on remaining weaknesses. Over the last 18 months, staff have used assessment and tracking information to good effect to set pupils challenging targets which are increasingly being met and occasionally exceeded. Procedures are now being enhanced to ensure all staff have a clearer picture of pupils' progress across the school rather than just in their own class.

The governing body benefits from the excellent expertise and commitment of its Chair and is challenging the school well through effective monitoring procedures and regular consultation with parents and carers. Individual governors willingly use their skills to support the school; for example, in supporting and monitoring curriculum developments in literacy. Together with staff, the governing body ensures that discrimination in any form is not tolerated, and the school is effective in promoting equality of opportunity.

A range of partnerships with other schools and organisations provides good support for pupils' education and welfare. The school's engagement with parents and carers is considerably strengthened by the very effective school web site. Regular training and updated policies, together with effective practice in all areas of the school's work, ensure safeguarding is good, so pupils are confident that they are safe and free from harm. The school's thorough review of its promotion of community cohesion indicates it is securely established with regard to the local and global dimension. However, promotion of cohesion in the wider national society is less well developed.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

A very productive partnership with the local playgroup helps children settle quickly, developing positive attitudes to learning and enjoying school. The excellent relationship forged with parents and carers significantly supports children's learning as there are a wealth of opportunities for them to become involved. Consequently, children make good progress and most exceed the standards expected for their age by the time they move into Year 1. A very large majority write correctly in sentences and recognise the sounds in words. Their oral language is exceptionally good so children engage very effectively in discussions with each other or with adults. Children are skilled at counting in twos, fives and tens and a majority gain a good understanding of place value in tens and units.

Effective leadership and management ensure provision is constantly reviewed and adapted to meet children's needs. It is very well organised and the very effective partnership between the teacher and teaching assistant ensures a cohesive approach to learning. Both the indoor and outdoor areas are used to good effect for children to engage in a range of activities across all areas of learning. Writing, a whole-school focus, is promoted well, although children are not regularly encouraged to write for a range of different purposes such as completing lists or writing invitations. There is a good balance of activities where children work with an adult or explore things for themselves. In the former, on a small minority of occasions, children are given too much direction which limits their learning. Assessment is very good and effectively used to plan the next stages in learning. Rigorous attention is given to ensuring children's welfare and safety; for example, in the daily checks of the outdoor area.

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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

A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire is happy with the school. In particular, they are most pleased with the fact that their children enjoy school and are safe and happy there. They praise the quality of leadership and management, many of those spoken to or who wrote to inspectors commending the work of the headteacher. Inspection evidence supports these views.

Of most concern to a very small minority of parents and carers is the way in which unacceptable behaviour is dealt with and the information they receive about their children's progress. Inspection evidence indicates that behaviour management strategies have improved considerably over the past year and support good behaviour well. It also indicates that parents and carers are well informed about their children's progress, although the school is keen to enhance this aspect of its work further.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Yetminster 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 80 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 157 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	64	28	35	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	64	28	35	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	45	36	45	7	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	43	40	50	4	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	41	51	34	43	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	36	43	54	4	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	36	45	38	48	3	4	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)	34	43	33	41	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	43	35	44	5	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	39	36	45	5	6	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	40	45	56	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	38	48	38	48	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	57	59	27	34	4	5	0	0

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 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.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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:	<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 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.



9 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Andrew's Church of England Primary School, Yetminster DT9 6LS

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We very much enjoyed our time talking to you and seeing all the things you do. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their lunchtime to talk to us. Your school is good and we are pleased that you and your parents and carers think so too.

Here are some of the things we found that were especially good about the school.

- You work hard and make good progress so that by the time you leave attainment is above average.
- You are friendly, polite and helpful young people who have developed an enthusiasm for learning.
- You get on well with your teachers. They give you lots of exciting activities that help you to learn new things, look after you well and give those of you who need extra help good support.
- Your new headteacher is working well with with staff and governors to help your school get even better.

Here are the things we have asked the school to do to help you improve.

- Make it clear in lessons what you are expected to learn rather than what you need to do. Make sure that you are all taught the same calculation methods in mathematics.
- Give you more opportunities to learn about people from other cultures and faiths who live in this country.
- Help subject leaders to find out how well pupils are learning in their subjects more effectively.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wilkinson Lead inspector

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