

All Saints Interchurch VA Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110859
Local Authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	363773
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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	200
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ruth Martin
Headteacher	Rachel Beeson
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2008
School address	County Road March, Cambridgeshire PE15 8ND
Telephone number	01354 659000
Fax number	01354 659000
Email address	office@allsaints.cambs.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2011
Inspection number	363773

Registered Childcare provision	All Saints Pre-School
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	48
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	Not previously inspected

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2011
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who observed 15 lessons led by eight different teachers. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation. This included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school improvement plan, leaders' monitoring records and pupils' work. Questionnaires from staff and from 94 parents and carers were analysed and their responses taken into account.

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

- How much progress do pupils in Years 1 and 2 make in their learning?
- How well teachers ensure that lessons are challenging for all groups of pupils.
- How well teachers with particular responsibilities contribute to the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures.
- How much progress do the children in the Reception class make in their language and literacy skills?

Information about the school

All Saints Interchurch is an average-sized primary school that is situated in the town of March. The school has joint Catholic and Anglican foundation. Due to this, pupils come from across the whole of the town and a few live in surrounding villages. The very large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and there are very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion known to be eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average.

The school provides term-time pre-school education for up to 52 children aged from three to five, and after-school care for pupils. Both are managed by the governing body and are included in this report. The school has gained a number of awards including the Basic Skills Quality Mark and International School status.

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

All Saints Interchurch is a good school. As a result of the effective leadership and management of the headteacher, the school has successfully built on the strengths found at the previous inspection, particularly in developing teaching and learning and establishing an exciting curriculum. This is recognised by most parents and carers, who are overwhelming in their support. One commented, 'This is a fantastic school with a strong ethos around good behaviour and learning. We are very pleased with how both our children have turned out.' The school's outstanding ethos is at the heart of its work and this, linked to the outstanding care, guidance and support provided, ensures that pupils thrive in their personal development. There is mutual respect between adults and pupils, from the youngest children in the pre-school to the after-school childcare provision. Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to school and learning, and feel exceptionally safe. Staff are very successful in ensuring that the pupils make an excellent contribution to both the school and the wider community. They thrive on the very many opportunities that they have for taking responsibility and raising money for charity. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured exceptionally well.

Children join the school with skills and understanding that are at the levels expected nationally. They settle well in the pre-school and make a successful start to their education in the warm and stimulating atmosphere of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress in all areas of learning and this is continued in the Reception class. In the past, progress has not been sufficiently strong in Years 1 and 2. However, improvements in teaching and learning now ensure that progress is good in reading, writing and mathematics, and the current Year 2 pupils are on course to attain standards that are above expected levels for the first time for some years. National comparative data show that pupils' progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6, and this remains the case because teaching and learning are good. In consequence, Year 6 pupils attain above average standards, and in reading and mathematics an above-average proportion of pupils are on track to reach the higher levels. The school is aware that not enough pupils reach the higher level in writing. A good focus to improve pupils' extended writing and to strengthen writing across the curriculum is starting to improve attainment, but these actions have not yet had a full impact on standards at the end of Year 6.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers manage pupils exceptionally well and there are good and positive relationships in all classes. Staff plan interesting activities which mostly engage and motivate the pupils. This is because teachers' planning generally takes account of the different learning needs of pupils to ensure a good level of challenge for all groups of pupils in most lessons. When teaching occasionally dips to satisfactory levels, it is typically because introductions are too long and explanations take too much time. Even when teaching is good, the pace of learning sometimes dips because teachers spend too long gleaning answers from pupils.

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Senior staff lead and manage well. They work closely as a team and are passionate in their pursuit of excellence. Teachers set high expectations for pupils and staff, and their close and thorough monitoring of teaching and learning gives them a clear view of where improvement is needed. The good quality self-evaluation procedures also enable staff to be held to account for their pupils' progress. This has resulted in improved standards and a strengthening of provision, providing a clear demonstration of the school's good capacity to sustain further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Lift the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding by:
 - improving the currently satisfactory teaching by ensuring that teachers' introductions to lessons are kept short and explanations brief
 - ensuring that the pace of learning remains brisk in all lessons.
- Increase the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 by consolidating the initiatives introduced.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy learning and this is reflected in most lessons, where progress is good. This is because the pupils are fully engaged with their learning and remain focused on the tasks set. They particularly enjoy the many occasions when teachers require them to work in small groups or pairs. This was evident in a good Year 6 literacy lesson when the pupils were focusing on persuasive writing and pupils worked effectively in groups to produce some key features of persuasive texts. The teacher provided a stimulating context for the work and the pupils were skilled in supporting and learning from each other while reviewing advertising material for an imaginary children's residential holiday centre. A good-quality range of intervention programmes and projects has proved effective in bringing about improvements in writing in Years 1 and 2. Consequently, pupils' progress has accelerated. Similarly, a concerted drive to improve the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities through a revamping of their support has ensured that these pupils' progress towards their targets is good. Although in the past attainment in mathematics has been stronger than in English, the gap is closing. Progress and attainment in reading are now good with pupils reaching above average levels at the end of Year 6. However, in writing, standards are not so strong and although the large majority of pupils are on course to attain the expected level, fewer pupils are expected to gain the higher level in writing than in reading and mathematics.

Pupils have a good understanding of the need to conduct a healthy lifestyle, not least by recognising the importance of robust exercise and healthy eating. Pupils are clear that there is little bullying and say they would readily turn to an adult if they were concerned. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils develop into thoughtful and mature young people who are prepared well for their next stage in education and life beyond.

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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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	1

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 successful introduction of a range of initiatives has enhanced key aspects of provision and improved pupils' achievement. For example, the recent development of a learning mentor for gifted and talented pupils has resulted in them thoroughly enjoying the good range of projects and activities that are devised specifically for them. The curriculum has been reviewed and the good range of topics and themes are carefully chosen. Good planning ensures that the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are taught well through linking subjects together. However, the full impact of this on lifting standards in writing has not yet been fully felt. A wide range of visits and visitors to school enriches learning. Year 4, for example, visited Burleigh House for a Tudor re-enactment, which was enjoyed by all. In addition, special weeks such as Literacy Alive and science week and multicultural weeks that are chosen by the pupils also enliven learning.

Teaching is mostly good. The positive relationships evident in all year groups result in classrooms that present with a calm and positive atmosphere in which pupils learn well. There has been an improvement in assessment for learning since the previous inspection. Teachers invariably outline lesson purposes and because they focus well on explaining success criteria for pupils, they are clear about what is being learned and also what they have to do to meet objectives. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to assess their own learning. For example, in a good quality Reception class lesson children were deciding how

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many pennies were needed to purchase airline tickets. The class teacher asked the children to show whether they understood or not. This resulted in those children who said they were uncertain about adding the coins together being given further time with the teacher to understand the calculations.

The school's excellent care for its pupils is evident in its support for pupils whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. For example, members of the support staff have focused training to support pupils who have social and emotional difficulties. In addition, trained bereavement counselling is available when needed, and valued by parents and carers. The school's close links with parents and carers of pupils with learning difficulties is evident in the gaining of the Basic Skills Quality mark. The good quality after-school club is appreciated by parents and carers, as is the good provision for three and four-year-old children. Parents and carers of these children also appreciate the lunchtime care provided.

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	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's successful leadership has resulted in a clear, shared vision for the school. It is based on a twin belief in developing the pupils' all-round abilities and securing continuous improvement in the school's provision and pupils' achievement. This is shared by the staff, who work closely together as a team. Morale is high and staff know that their views are valued and taken into account. The senior leadership team instil a sense of drive throughout the school. Teachers with responsibilities make a good contribution to the school's robust monitoring procedures and, as a result, the quality of teaching is typically good.

The governing body is effective in ensuring that the school meets its statutory targets and also ensuring that all regulations are met. It is particularly successful in ensuring that the arrangements to safeguard pupils are highly effective, taking great care to ensure that protection arrangements are updated constantly to reflect their high priority. It also ensures that pupils' views are sought. For example, arrangements for the security of the site were reviewed and the school council was directly involved in the decision-making process. The governing body supports the school well and, because it has good arrangements for its members to visit the school regularly and is in a good position to provide the necessary challenge for the school.

The school is very inclusive and it successfully promotes equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any sort is not tolerated. The staff and governing body are rightly proud of their joint foundation, which effectively promotes a drawing of the Anglican and

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Catholic communities together and leads to a harmonious place for pupils to learn and play together. There are strengths in the effectiveness of the school's promotion of community cohesion. Pupils, for example, played a key part with the local council staff in designing a new play space in the town. Pupils' religious understanding is promoted well by regular visits being made to the mosque in Peterborough. There are good links with schools in other countries, such as a school in St Jean de Braye with which pupils exchange emails and their art work, as well as receiving visitors from the school. These have been recognised by the achievement of the International Schools Award. The school has rightly identified that it has not yet done enough to develop links with a contrasting school in the United Kingdom.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the pre-school benefit from a stimulating and balanced curriculum that supports their learning well. Staff rightly place the children's welfare at the heart of their provision and this results in them feeling safe and secure. Children are confident and enjoy the good range of activities provided for them, both indoors and outdoors, although the resources available for the staff in the temporary classroom, both indoors and outdoors, are not as rich as those in the second classroom in the main school building.

Close links with the pre-school enable children to make a smooth and seamless transfer in the Reception class. This is aided by staff making home visits. This too ensures that children settle quickly and well. A good range of stimulating activities helps to engage and interest the children. Staff ensure that there is a good balance between activities that they direct and those that the children choose for themselves. Children in both the pre-school and Reception class enjoy playing and learning together in the outdoor learning area. This is organised well to encourage progress across all the required areas of learning.

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In the past, children's literacy and language skills had been a relative weakness on entry to Year 1. However, the new leader of the Reception class has made changes to provision, particularly in the teaching of sounds and letters, and these are having a positive benefit, with more children exceeding the early learning goals in this area.

Leadership and management of both the pre-school and Reception year are good. All necessary policies and procedures to ensure the children's safety are secure, assessments are of good quality and match requirements, and the staff work closely and effectively together as a team. The school's plans to establish combined leadership across the whole of the Early Years Foundation stage are well founded.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers showed a largely positive response to all aspects of the school. They particularly appreciate the progress that their children make and they recognise the strengths in the teaching. The overwhelming majority said that they were happy with their children's experiences at the school. A very small number had consistently negative views and there were a few adverse comments about the management of pupils' behaviour. However, these were not reflected in the overall views of parents and carers. Inspection findings are that pupils' behaviour is good and the school has robust and secure procedures to manage pupils' behaviour. A few also said that the school does not meet their children's particular needs, but inspection findings show that pupils of all abilities and aptitudes make similarly good progress in their learning and personal development.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at All Saints Interchurch VA 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 94 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 200 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	67	27	29	4	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	64	68	29	31	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	50	53	40	43	3	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	47	49	52	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	47	50	43	46	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	53	38	40	5	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	51	41	44	4	4	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	41	48	51	3	3	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	44	43	46	9	10	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	41	46	49	6	6	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	41	47	50	3	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	44	47	45	48	3	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	52	42	45	2	2	1	1

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.



25 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of All Saints Interchurch VA Primary School, March, PE15 8ND

Thank you for making us welcome when we recently inspected your school. We were pleased to see that almost all of you enjoy school. I thought you may be interested to know what we are saying in our report. Your school provides you with a good education, which means that you achieve well in your work. Your headteacher does a good job and she is supported well by all the staff. Because you have lots of opportunities to participate in clubs and visits, this helps you to develop good skills in working together. Your behaviour is good and your headteacher and staff take excellent care of you. This helps you to feel outstandingly safe in school and you have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe outside school too. You told us that your teachers make learning fun and we can see why you said this. Your teachers provide interesting activities, which you enjoy, and they make sure that you learn well.

Even in a good school like yours there are things to do to make it even better! We have asked your headteacher to make sure that lessons and your learning become even better. We have asked this to be done in three ways. First, to make sure that your teachers' introductions to lessons and their explanations are not too long. Second, to make sure that the speed at which you learn in lessons remains brisk. Finally, we have asked that your teachers concentrate on making sure that more of you reach the higher level in writing. We know that your staff are working hard on this and hope you will too. There have been improvements in your writing skills. Even so, more of you reach a higher level in reading and mathematics than you do in writing.

We hope that you continue to enjoy school and learning.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector

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