

Selling Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	137481
Local Authority	NA
Inspection number	386093
Inspection dates	15–16 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Margaret Coussins

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	167
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sid Harding
Headteacher	Ian Fidge
Date of previous school inspection	NA
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons and eight teachers. Meetings were held with the executive headteacher, head of school, governors, other staff with leadership responsibilities and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, pupils' progress records and the safeguarding procedures. Questionnaires from 80 parents and carers were received and analysed along with those from staff and pupils.

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

- How well learners know and understand what they need to do to improve to determine the quality of marking and feedback.
- The effectiveness of the strategies the school has established to improve pupils' writing.
- The progress of more-able pupils to determine the consistency of challenging teaching and the impact of the curriculum.
- The impact of the federation.

Information about the school

Selling is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is much lower than that found nationally as is the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Their needs relate mainly to moderate learning difficulties. The school makes provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage in a Reception class. In 2010, the school formed a federation with two local primary schools. On 1 September 2011, the three federated schools converted to Academy status. As the inspection took place at a very early stage in the term, the school was in the process of constituting its new board of trustees, directors and governing body. For the inspection, the inspectors interviewed the Chair and Vice-Chair of the school's previous governing body, both of whom remain involved as either a trustee or a director in the new Academy. The Academy is led by an executive headteacher and each school has an appointed head of school. Selling has gained Gold accreditation for languages, the Activemark and the International Schools awards.

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

Selling is a good school. At the heart of the school's success is the commitment by all staff to meet the personal as well as the academic needs of all of the pupils. As a result, pupils develop as well-rounded individuals who are happy and confident and really enjoy being at school, which is reflected in their high attendance rates. A parent reflected the views of many by commenting, 'The children at Selling are happy, polite, respectful and take pride in the school.'

Pupils make good progress over their time in school. Their achievement is outstanding and by the time they leave, attainment is high in English and mathematics. Combined with their good personal skills, this means that they are outstandingly well prepared for the next stage of their education. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similarly good progress to others because their needs are identified at an early stage, effective support is provided and their progress is carefully monitored.

Teaching is good overall; there are examples of teaching with outstanding features, which result in pupils making outstanding progress in these lessons. On occasion, however, the pace and delivery of lessons does not provide sufficient challenge to extend the learning of more-able pupils in particular and sometimes teachers lack confidence to provide more exciting lessons to enliven learning. Children get a satisfactory start to school in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Previous outcomes indicated by scores on the Early Years Foundation Stage profile show that pupils who are now in Year 1 met or exceeded the goals for their learning in all areas except creative development. Currently, however, the indoor and outdoor space for children in the Reception class is not enabling children to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding to their maximum potential. The school has correctly identified the need to develop the outdoor learning space and has plans underway for this.

The school works exceptionally well with its parents and carers. One parent wrote, 'The excellent communication from the school on all issues is a positive strength and helps me feel involved and informed of my children's education.' Outstanding partnerships with the federated schools and other schools and organisations are well established, enrich the curriculum and contribute significantly to pupils' well-being and learning opportunities. The day-to-day arrangements and practice for keeping pupils safe are well established and implemented effectively by all staff. As a result pupils feel safe and secure in school. However, although requirements are met, the governing body has lacked a degree of rigour and frequency in monitoring policies

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and procedures and the school is aware of the need to ensure that future arrangements are sufficiently robust.

The executive headteacher's highly effective leadership, supported very effectively by the head of school, ensures high expectations for pupils and staff. Self-evaluation is efficient and accurate and clearly identifies strengths to build upon and areas for further improvement, leading to effective action being taken. For example, a focus on teaching key skills in English has had a positive impact on improving writing skills and the introduction of '5-a-day' practice sessions has improved attainment and progress in mathematics. Since the previous inspection, attainment has improved from above average to high and partnerships have been strengthened through the federation. This demonstrates that there is good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To sustain high achievement, ensure the quality of teaching consistently matches that of the best by:
 - maintaining a good pace of learning in all lessons
 - providing appropriate challenge so that the more-able pupils make the progress of which they are capable
 - supporting all teachers in developing the confidence to provide exciting learning opportunities to enliven learning.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that the learning environment indoors and outdoors enables children to develop skills to their maximum potential in all areas of learning.
- Ensure that those responsible for the school's accountability in the new Academy monitor the work of the school, in particular the safeguarding arrangements, with sufficient rigour and frequency.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Children start school with attainment that is generally at the expected levels for their age. By the time they leave, attainment is high. Pupils really enjoy learning and this, along with their positive attitudes, good behaviour and good interaction with each other, makes an important contribution to their outstanding achievement. For example, pupils in Year 6 worked extremely well in small groups to explore key vocabulary for the stories they were going to write. They were motivated and inspired by the teacher's good and imaginative use of the interactive whiteboard. In a follow-up lesson they used their previous learning to good effect to write skilled and imaginative story openings using clauses to add detail. They made very good progress in applying their knowledge and understanding of clauses to enhance writing and benefited from having two teachers working together very effectively. Pupils in Year 5 achieved very well in a mathematics lesson because of skilled, confident teaching that challenged them and moved their learning forward at a good pace. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also achieved well as a

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result of skilled and sensitive support from the teaching assistant who provided good oral and visual prompts to ensure their engagement and understanding. The teacher’s excellent questioning skills ensured that pupils’ thinking and learning were extended and they made very good progress in their knowledge of multiplying and dividing integers by 10, 100 and 1,000 using place value grids and exploring the rules and patterns.

Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe and they demonstrate this in lessons, around the school and through their consideration and respect for others. They conduct their own risk assessments of their classrooms, an activity that promotes their mature and responsible approach to their own and others’ safety. They and their parents and carers appreciate the fact that the school encourages them to take risks but stay safe. One parent wrote, ‘We like the fact that the children can climb the trees in the field – a refreshing attitude!’ The pupils know, however, that they do not climb ‘above the line’. The pupils appreciate the benefits and advantages of a small school community. One said, ‘The best thing about the school is that we all know and look out for each other and we’re all friends.’ Pupils enjoy their responsibilities and take them seriously. ‘Buddies’ were observed in the playground giving sensible and mature support to others. Members of the school council feel they have a strong voice in the school and that staff take their views and suggestions seriously. The inclusive and Christian ethos of the school and the well-established links with the Church make a positive contribution to pupils’ good social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. They have a good awareness of how to stay fit and healthy as reflected in the Activemark award.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	1
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

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How effective is the provision?

Teachers and teaching assistants have excellent relationships with pupils and teaching mostly engages pupils well. There is a good pace to learning in most lessons where teachers encourage pupils to be resourceful and independent. In these lessons pupils make good and often better progress and learning is challenging and memorable for them. A notable feature of the best lessons is the effective use of assessment, including marking and feedback, which not only gives pupils useful information on how to improve but also encourages them to reflect and evaluate their own progress and learning. Pupils clearly know their targets for their learning. The good curriculum is enhanced exceptionally well by a wide range of enrichment opportunities, including clubs, visitors to school and trips. These activities very effectively broaden pupils’ interests, experiences and skills. Pupils are taught French from Year 1 onwards and the school’s commitment to this provision is reflected in the school’s Gold accreditation for languages. The school has correctly identified that its plans to further link aspects of different subjects, including information and communication technology, will provide more creative and purposeful learning opportunities. The curriculum has been adapted to include a range of support programmes to ensure that the needs of learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities are met well and they are fully included in all aspects of school life. The school provides good care, guidance and support for pupils and their families, particularly for those whose circumstances may make them potentially vulnerable. The overwhelming majority of pupils agree that adults in the school care about them. Transition procedures into school, through the key stages and into Year 7, are effective and ensure good levels of support for pupils and their families.

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?

Leaders and managers share a drive, vision and good ambition to improve and provide the best possible learning experiences for pupils. Governors who are continuing in their role within the Academy know the school well and provide effective strategic support for the federation and transition to Academy status. The inclusive, caring and Christian ethos of the school ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to learn and develop without fear of discrimination. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored through formal observation and where

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weaknesses are observed, support is provided. Systems for tracking pupils’ progress enable senior leaders to have a clear idea of where additional support is required to meet individual needs. Leaders have developed the school as a cohesive community in which pupils show respect, tolerance and understanding for others and there are very strong links with the local community. Pupils learn about other cultures through the curriculum and through their study of other languages. There are links with schools in France and Uganda that have helped the school to gain its International School award. The school has correctly identified the need for further development of pupils’ understanding of the diversity of British society and plans are under way to link with other schools and organisations in different circumstances.

The school is highly committed to working in partnership with its federated schools and other schools and organisations and takes a leading role in this work. As a result, pupils are not compromised by the restrictions of the space in the school, for example, the lack of a school hall for physical education, as partnership opportunities ensure that pupils receive their curriculum entitlement and they make a significant contribution to pupils’ outstanding achievement and their well-being.

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	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are happy and settled and respond quickly to routines after just a few days in school. One parent expressed the views of many in the comment, ‘My child has settled in really quickly and is very happy.’ Good relationships between children and the team of staff ensure that children feel safe and secure. Risk assessments are carried out on a daily basis to ensure children’s safety. Outcomes for children who have moved into Key Stage 1 were good as children exceeded the goals for their

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learning, particularly in their personal development and aspects of their communication, language and literacy skills. Children are encouraged to develop their independence by storing their own book bags in the morning and registering their names for a packed lunch or a school meal. They learn to take responsibility by tidying up their activities and understand the importance of hand washing after visiting the toilet and after playing outside. Good induction procedures and links with parents and carers ensure a smooth transition into school. One parent commented, 'I am extremely happy with the communication, assistance by staff, procedures etcetera experienced to date.' The overall quality of provision is satisfactory. The children are confident, articulate and eager to learn and experience new things but are not consistently provided with a sufficient range of stimulating, exciting activities to meet their enquiring, curious minds in all areas of learning. The classroom and the outdoor learning area are not currently providing an attractive, enabling environment for children to develop their skills to their maximum potential. The outdoor area has been correctly identified by the school as an area to develop. There have been considerable staffing changes over the past two years in the Early Years Foundation Stage and its leadership and management have benefited, and continue to benefit, from the skills and expertise of an experienced teacher from a federated school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A larger than average proportion of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Of these, almost all agree that their children enjoy school, the school keeps their children safe and that they are happy with their children’s experience at school. Questionnaire responses show high levels of satisfaction with all areas and are a reflection of the excellent engagement the school has with parents and carers. A very small minority of those who responded expressed some concern about children’s progress. Inspection evidence found that overall progress is good and it is often better, but on occasion some more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently to make the progress of which they are capable.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Selling Church of England 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 80 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 167 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	62	78	16	20	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	67	84	11	14	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	39	49	35	44	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	51	29	36	4	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	48	60	30	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	49	61	23	29	2	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	49	34	43	2	3	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)	54	68	18	23	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	53	66	21	26	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	46	35	44	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	44	38	48	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	52	65	22	28	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	59	74	18	23	0	0	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



19 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Selling Church of England Primary School, Faversham, ME13 9RQ

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school and for talking to us about your work. You are very polite and friendly and we appreciated the way you helped us find out about your school. You are right to really enjoy coming to Selling because it is a good school.

These are some of the things that really stood out.

- You make good progress and achieve outstandingly well during your time in the school and by the time you leave your attainment in mathematics and English is high. Well done for working so hard to achieve this because this means you are exceptionally well prepared to move on to your next schools.
- Your school and your parents and carers work very successfully together.
- There are outstanding partnerships with other schools and organisations to make sure that you do not miss out on any activities that are not possible in your small school.
- You enjoy learning and coming to school because your attendance is high and we were impressed by how well you all get on together and help each other in lessons and at playtimes.

There are some things your school could do even better.

- We would like all of your lessons to be as good as the very best ones. To do this all of your lessons must help you learn quickly, challenge you with work that is not too easy for you and be exciting so that learning is memorable for you.
- So that the children in the Reception class can do as well as possible we would like the classroom and the outside area to be more exciting and stimulating so they can develop good skills in all areas of their learning. Maybe you have some ideas for this.
- The people who are responsible for all the work the school does should check more frequently and in more detail on all the policies in the school, particularly everything that helps you to feel safe.

Thank you again for all your help.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Coussins
Lead inspector

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