

St Martin's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Scarborough

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121615
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	380284
Inspection dates	22–23 May 2012
Lead inspector	Nigel Cromey-Hawke

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	278
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Graham Scott
Headteacher	Steph Brown
Date of previous school inspection	5 December 2006
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Introduction

Inspection team

Nigel Cromey-Hawke
Nancy Walker
Robert Jones

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 15 lessons taught by nine teachers. They also held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers and groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including development planning, pupils' work, safeguarding arrangements, self-evaluation records, relevant policies and performance data. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection. They also scrutinised questionnaires from 78 parents and carers, 36 staff and 99 pupils.

Information about the school

This is larger than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The number of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is well below average. The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school operates its own breakfast club. The school has Healthy School status, the Dyslexia Friendly award and the Special Educational Needs Quality Mark.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	3

Key Findings

- This is a satisfactory school. Its main strengths are its very welcoming and caring ethos, where pupils are highly valued as individuals and the good behaviour of pupils. St Martin's is not yet good because there is too much satisfactory teaching and some aspects of leadership and management are underdeveloped. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Achievement is satisfactory. From typically as expected starting points in Reception children make good progress but pupils' progress has been highly variable across the rest of the school over time and is overall satisfactory. Attainment on leaving in Year 6 is broadly average but is improving as a result of new ways of working and higher expectations introduced recently. Attainment in writing remains below average in some classes due to past weaker teaching. The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is satisfactory but also improving.
- Teaching is satisfactory, with some that is outstanding. The best teaching is characterised by good pace and challenge and the good use of assessment information to plan lessons and make them interesting and relevant. In less effective teaching there is insufficient pace to maintain pupils' full interest and activities are not as well matched to pupils' needs, especially for the more able. Individual pupil learning targets are not used consistently well across all lessons and subjects to promote learning.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. Almost all pupils say they feel very safe and enjoy their time in school. Bullying incidents are extremely rare and very well dealt with. Attendance is average and improving rapidly.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school knows its strengths and weaknesses and senior leaders are managing the school's performance effectively. Leaders have strengthened the quality of teaching. Identified gaps in pupils' performance have been targeted, with some successfully closed, and achievement within the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 has been improved. Aspects of improvement planning and communication with the governing body are not well developed.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement by ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is at least good in all lessons by:
 - providing sufficient pace to secure pupils' interest and engagement with their learning
 - developing pupils' writing skills further so that they can more effectively communicate their learning
 - getting a better match of activities within lessons to pupils' needs, especially the more able
 - ensuring there is more consistent and effective use made of target-setting across all classes and subjects.
- Sharpen the focus of development planning so that it is clearer as to what exactly needs to be improved and the evaluation of actions upon outcomes is more meaningful.
- Ensure that the governing body has a clearer understanding of the performance of the school so that it can more effectively support and challenge its work.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Many parents and carers think that their children make good progress. Some point out that this is variable across the school. The inspection found that this is indeed the case and that achievement over time across the school is satisfactory. Children start in the Reception Year with levels of basic skills that are broadly typical for their age. Adults within the Reception class ensure that there is a good balance of teacher-led and child-initiated activities. As a result, children here make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the good teaching in an environment that has improved markedly over the last few years and now caters well for their needs.

Attainment by the time pupils leave in Year 6 is broadly average. This is because their progress over time throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 is in line with pupils nationally, given their starting points. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress. In lessons, most pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding and learn and practise their skills in a satisfactory way. They are keen to succeed, apply themselves well in lessons, work at a good pace and enjoy themselves when provided with appropriate tasks and guidance. The school identified underachievement at Key Stage 1 in the recent past but has tackled this robustly. Attainment, including attainment in reading, rose last year to above average by the end of Year 2. The school also identified weaker teaching within lower Key Stage 2 and in pupils' attainment in writing across the school. New staff appointments and a programme of support and challenge have begun to overcome this, but there is still a legacy of weaker attainment in writing in some classes that limits some pupils' ability to communicate their learning effectively.

Attainment in reading by the time pupils reach Year 6 matches national expectations but school assessments and listening to pupils read during the inspection reveal that this is also improving. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that the attainment of most groups of pupils is rising. It also shows, however, that more-able pupils are not always being sufficiently challenged in their learning, something they verified in discussion with inspectors. Overall, there is clear evidence of improving achievement, past gaps in performance between boys and girls have been closed and the majority of pupils are on track to meet the challenging targets the school has set. As a result, they are being prepared in a satisfactory way for the next stage in their learning.

Quality of teaching

Most parents and carers feel that teaching in the school is good. Inspectors judge teaching to be satisfactory but improving as new ways of working and clearer expectations about pupils' performance begin to have an impact. Typically, good teaching is characterised by good pace and challenge that stimulate pupils' interests and engage them successfully in their learning. Good planning in these lessons uses assessment data well to provide varied activities that often have real-life applications. In the Reception class, for example, outdoor learning was closely linked to the classroom focus and provided children with stimulating learning opportunities that they clearly enjoyed. In another case, high-quality research by pupils in Year 6 into the Aztecs was skilfully developed by the teacher, while constantly promoting their reading skills. Phonics (the teaching of letters and their sounds) lessons are also often good, and the recently introduced programmes for promoting better writing and reading are often used well in the best lessons to develop pupils' skills in these areas. The best teaching supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, especially through the thinking skills sessions that develop pupils' abilities to reason and conduct public discussion.

Teaching remains satisfactory overall, however, because of inconsistencies in the level of challenge for pupils, especially the more able, and the pace of lessons. In satisfactory lessons teachers often talk too much and do not monitor the progress of groups of pupils sufficiently well to move their learning on sufficiently quickly. Assessment data are not used to full effect in satisfactory lessons to devise challenging activities to match the needs of pupils and stretch their learning. Individual pupil learning targets have been in place in Year 6 for some time but have only recently been extended to other year groups. Their use within English is extensive and their impact within writing is beginning to be seen. Within mathematics there is great variability of practice in this respect, with the result that their impact in raising expectations and supporting progress is not as good as it should be. The school has recently introduced further intervention programmes to close the gaps in pupils learning and boost support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. These are often led by talented teaching assistants and are beginning to have a positive impact on the learning of these groups.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good. The school is a calm, well-ordered and harmonious community that reflects its Christian ethos. Parents, carers and pupils are justifiably very confident that pupils are safe and well looked after. Pupils act safely in lessons and around the school and play well together during lunch and break times. There have been no exclusions for several years. A good range of planned curriculum activities

raise pupils' awareness of how to keep safe, for example near roads, railways and the sea. Bullying of all kinds is extremely rare and when encountered is dealt with very well. Discussions with pupils revealed that they have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying, incidents of racial abuse, bullying of pupils with special educational needs and bullying by or of minority groups. Staff operate a comprehensive system of rewards and consequences effectively. The school also includes within its daily lesson planning references to its church school values that promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very strongly. The school can point to cases where the ethos and levels of care and support it provides have had a significant impact upon local families and some pupils' behaviour. Many pupils also take advantage of the breakfast club to get a healthy start to the school day, reflecting the school's award in this area. Many are also highly involved in the wider life of the school and its support for the local community, through charity work and support for children in Africa, China and in schools of a very different type in this country. The attendance of pupils over time is average, being affected often by the impact of its seaside location that necessitates families taking holidays outside of the tourist season. Attendance is improving rapidly, however, as a result of clear expectations by the school and its very good relations with parents and carers. Punctuality to both school and lessons is excellent.

Leadership and management

Leaders and managers at all levels are fully committed to raising the effectiveness of the school. Working together, they have evaluated the school's strengths and weaknesses and developed a clear vision for school improvement focused upon raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher and staff have identified areas of weakness in the school's performance and actions have been taken to address them, with noticeable effect. Professional development for staff is closely aligned to these school priorities and has been a key factor in securing improvements in teaching and learning. Subject leaders know their areas of responsibility well. As a result, achievement in significant areas has been improved, as has attendance, staffing has been strengthened and there is proven capacity for sustained improvement. There is an extensive programme of lesson observation and monitoring. The governing body is highly committed to supporting and challenging the work of the school and takes a very active part in its daily workings. Its understanding of the performance of the school is underdeveloped, however. The school recognises that its development planning lacks a sharpness of focus upon what exactly needs to be improved, making implementation less effective and the evaluation of the impact of actions upon outcomes less meaningful.

The curriculum is well structured. It has recently been revised to provide a stronger focus upon literacy and numeracy, supported by rich learning experiences through topic approaches involving other subject areas. The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, especially through its extensive international links, promotion of music and development of pupils' health, fitness and resilience through sport and residential outdoor activity breaks. The school engages very well with parents and carers and involves them extensively in school life, helped by strong links with the local parish. The school promotes equality and tackles discrimination well, with the very small number of incidents dealt with sensitively and appropriately and gaps in pupils' performance being rapidly identified and action taken to narrow them. Safeguarding arrangements are fully met.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



24 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Martin's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Scarborough, Scarborough, YO11 3BW

Thank you for the warm reception you gave me and my colleagues when we inspected your school recently and for sharing your views with us, both in the school and through the questionnaires. You were very friendly and enthusiastic about what you do.

St Martin's is a satisfactory school. You get a good start to your learning in the Reception class and make good progress there. Progress throughout the rest of the school is, however, satisfactory, although improving recently as higher expectations and some new ways of working begin to have an impact. By the time you leave the school in Year 6 the vast majority of you reach broadly average levels of attainment. Those of you who are disabled or have special educational needs also make satisfactory progress, but, again, this is improving. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some that is good. The school looks after you very well, you say you feel very safe and you obviously enjoy being there. Your behaviour is good and your attendance, although average, is also improving. Well done! The range of subjects you take is good and includes very popular outdoor activity residential experiences. Senior staff lead the school in a satisfactory way and are increasingly bringing about improvements.

To make your school better, we have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to:

- make sure that all your lessons are at least good or better
- ensure that when monitoring the school's work and planning improvements there is a consistently clear focus upon improving your learning as well as your personal development.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Cromey-Hawke
Lead inspector

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