

# St Sebastian's Church of England Aided Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	110024
<b>Local authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	378036
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 July 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Julie Sackett

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary Aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	158
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mark Carless
<b>Headteacher</b>	Colin Rouse
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Nine Mile Ride Wokingham RG40 3AT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01344 772427
<b>Fax number</b>	01344 750697
<b>Email address</b>	head@st-sebastians.wokingham.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	4–5 July 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	378036



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Julie Sackett

Additional Inspector

Howard Jones

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The team observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons and part lessons taught by 8 teachers. Discussions were held with senior staff, teachers, parents and carers, members of the governing body and pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at documentation including the school's improvement plan, safeguarding arrangements, policies and records of pupils' progress and attainment. The inspection team analysed 97 questionnaires from parents and carers, as well as those from staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

St Sebastian's is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and the proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible to receive free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils supported by action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The percentage of pupils who join or leave the school other than at expected times is above average. The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress. The school has a number of awards, for example International School award and an accreditation for Personal, Social and Health Education. There is a breakfast club on site which is managed by the governing body and which was included in this inspection.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. The school is strongly inclusive so that pupils feel valued. The school is not yet good because teaching over time leads to pupils making satisfactory, rather than good, progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.
- Children enter the Reception class at the expected level for their age. They make good progress to reach the beginning of Year 1 with above expected levels of attainment. Although progress varies, pupils' achievement throughout the rest of the school is satisfactory.
- The quality of teaching varies but is satisfactory over time. Where teaching is better, questioning is used well to evaluate pupils' needs and actively involve pupils in their learning. However, in some lessons teachers' expectations are too low and opportunities are missed for pupils to work independently in different subjects. As a result, pupils are not sufficiently challenged, particularly the more able, so that their progress slows.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and this results in good behaviour. Pupils are polite and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Pupils feel safe because they are well looked after and relationships are strong.
- Senior leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and development needs and have been successful in securing important improvements. Leadership of teaching, including monitoring of teaching and learning and the use of performance management, is satisfactory but lacks sufficient rigour to drive more rapid improvement and to ensure that pupil progress is good. The role played by middle leaders is not yet fully developed. Opportunities are missed for teachers to learn from more effective practice which exists in the school.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By April 2013, accelerate pupils' progress in English and mathematics through ensuring that teaching is consistently good or better by:
  - using assessment information to ensure that activities are matched accurately to individual pupils' needs and there is sufficient challenge, particularly for more-able pupils
  - raising teachers' expectations of the progress pupils can make
  - ensuring that pupils are actively involved in lessons by giving them more opportunities to work independently of adult support in different subjects.
  
- Improve the leadership of the school by:
  - ensuring that assessment data are analysed rigorously by senior and middle leaders and used promptly to identify and address the needs of those pupils whose progress has slowed
  - increasing opportunities for teachers to learn from existing more effective practice in the school.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Almost all parents and carers feel that their children are making good progress and most pupils agree with this view. Inspection evidence, including the school's own monitoring information, shows that overall progress and achievement for all pupils, including those who join or leave at other than the usual times, are satisfactory rather than good. Although children's skills and understanding on entry to the school have been consistently higher than those expected for their age, this picture is changing. Recently, children have begun school with the skills and abilities more in line with the expectations for their age. They make good progress to leave Reception with above average levels of skills and knowledge for their age. Their pace of learning has accelerated this academic year. A recent focus on language and literacy, including the way letters and sounds are linked (phonics), has been particularly successful in accelerating children's progress in reading and writing. This was evident during the inspection when children in the Reception class happily and confidently wrote about some of their favourite activities for their future Year 1 teacher, by sounding out unknown words.

Pupils make good progress in the development of basic skills when activities are interesting and build on prior learning. For example, Year 6 pupils enjoyed writing an opening passage for a fantasy story, confidently using a thesaurus to help them to improve their work. However, pupils' progress overall through Years 1 to 6 is uneven. Learning is not always accurately matched to pupils' needs, particularly for the more able, and expectations are not always sufficiently high.

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Pupils' progress over time has been slower during Key Stage 1. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is broadly average overall, although standards in reading were above average in 2011. There has been a year-on-year decline in pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics over the past four years. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has successfully halted this decline so that the current Year 2 pupils are attaining higher levels than in recent years.

Pupils' progress accelerates during Key Stage 2, so that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is above average in reading, writing and mathematics, representing satisfactory progress from their starting points. A school focus on ensuring that pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs are well supported has been very successful because learning programmes for these pupils are accurately matched to individual needs and consistently build on pupils' prior learning. As a result, these pupils make good progress in the development of personal and academic skills. An example of this was seen in a Year 6 lesson when a teaching assistant combined her effective questioning skills with an accurate understanding of pupils' needs to support the successful completion of a piece of written work.

### **Quality of teaching**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, although the vast majority of parents, carers and pupils consider it to be good. Inspectors found that while some of the teaching seen was very effective, this was not consistent across the school. So, the impact of teaching over time has been variable, resulting in satisfactory achievement overall. Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively. As a result, relationships between pupils and staff are good. Pupils respond well to opportunities to work cooperatively, expressing themselves well and demonstrating respect for the views of others. For example, pupils in a Year 4 lesson worked effectively together to develop their understanding of how adjectives can be used to develop a setting for a play, whilst in Year 5, pupils worked well collaboratively to consider the impact of poetry. Some teachers demonstrate confident subject knowledge, which is used well to plan lively and interesting lessons to extend pupils' understanding. In some cases, however, teachers' questioning is not used effectively to evaluate pupils' emerging needs during the course of a lesson and to ensure that planned activities build on prior learning. In some instances, expectations are too low, particularly of the more able, and teachers are too quick to offer information and answers when pupils are capable of thinking for themselves and this slows their progress.

Teaching assistants set clear expectations for pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs, so that these pupils understand what they need to do to be successful, are fully included during lessons and make good progress. For example, during the inspection, sensitive support provided by a teaching assistant in Year 4 successfully supported pupils' contributions to the completion of an experiment.

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Reading skills are taught systematically throughout the school, including phonics, so that pupils make secure progress and enjoy books. However, the reading material which pupils are asked to read is not always accurately matched to individual needs and provides insufficient challenge for some, so that progress in reading is not maximised. The school has been successful in developing the teaching of science, with an effective focus on the teaching of investigative skills. For example, in Year 4, pupils enthusiastically formulated sensible predictions about whether sugar would dissolve more rapidly in hot, warm or cold water, based on first-hand experiences, before going on to complete an experiment. Meanwhile, pupils in Year 6, successfully developed hypotheses about the effectiveness of acids in neutralising bee stings. However, teachers plan too few opportunities for pupils to work independently in other areas of the curriculum. The school has identified this as a priority for development.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Inspection evidence of pupils' behaviour over time indicates that pupils feel safe and that they behave well throughout the school. All the parents and carers who returned a questionnaire agreed that their children are safe and the vast majority consider behaviour to be good. Most pupils concur with the views expressed by their parents and carers, and one said, 'Everyone here accepts everybody as they are.' They have a clear sense of how to behave well and are welcoming, polite and keen to learn. In the Reception class, children appear happy and secure and are interested in their learning. Well-established routines and clear expectations provide a secure foundation for their future education. In the rest of the school, behaviour management is effective and time is rarely wasted in lessons.

Pupils play a positive and active part in the life of the school and are proud of the roles of responsibility they hold, such as 'buddies' to support the younger children. Pupils know about different forms of bullying, such as cyber-bullying and racism, although they are confident that bullying rarely happens. Pupils have a sensible awareness of how they can play a part in ensuring their own safety and know that adults in the school will respond quickly if they have any concerns. The school works successfully with families to help them to support their children's learning. Attendance is broadly average. Pupils enjoy the advantages of the breakfast club which has also contributed to improvements in attendance.

### **Leadership and management**

St Sebastian's is an inclusive school, where all are welcomed. Appropriate procedures are in place to tackle any discrimination should it occur and the school is committed to promoting equality. The way in which the school engages with families from all heritages is a particular strength and most parents and carers expressed confidence in the school. Nevertheless, with the exception of pupils who are disabled and those who have special educational needs who are doing particularly well, pupils currently achieve satisfactorily. The headteacher and members of the governing body have an accurate view of the school's strengths and development needs and steps taken by

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the school have been successful in ensuring improvements. For example, there are increased opportunities for pupils to carry out practical investigations in science; the quality of communication with parents and carers has improved; and, a downward trend in attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been halted. Improvements such as these demonstrate the school's capacity to improve further.

Systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching, including performance management procedures, are secure, although inconsistencies in teaching and learning remain. Procedures to track and monitor pupils' progress are used particularly well to identify and address the needs of pupils who are disabled and of those who have special educational needs. However, more generally, the analysis of tracking information is not sufficiently robust to enable the school to identify and address weaknesses in subjects or year groups promptly. Professional development makes a positive contribution to school improvement, although opportunities are missed for teachers to learn from the more effective practice which already exists in the school. The role of the governing body has developed well so that members of the governing body play an increasingly effective part in supporting the school and holding it to account. Safeguarding procedures comply with statutory requirements.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and enriched well. However, too few opportunities are planned for pupils to work independently across the curriculum. Opportunities for the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are particularly effective in supporting pupils' ability to appreciate and reflect on the world in which they live as illustrated, for example, in the quality of the stained glass window designed by pupils.



## 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](http://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.**



6 July 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of St Sebastian's Church of England Aided Primary School,  
Wokingham RG40 3AT**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school and for completing the questionnaire. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. Most of you told us that you think behaviour in the school is good and that you feel safe. Inspectors found that you behave well, enjoy school and feel safe because adults in the school look after you very well. Your progress and achievement are satisfactory. Most of you told us that you learn a lot in lessons. Inspectors found that some of you make good progress because teachers plan interesting lessons and make sure that learning helps you to build on what you already know and understand. Sometimes, however, some of you do not make as much progress as you could because you do not have enough opportunities to contribute your ideas to lessons. We have asked the school to do these things to help you make better progress:

- make sure that activities are not too hard and not too easy and that you have opportunities to work independently and that there are more opportunities during lessons when you can talk about your ideas
- give you more opportunities to practise your literacy and mathematical skills in different lessons
- make sure that senior leaders keep a close check on the work of the school and the impact of the improvements it makes.

You can help by always working hard and doing your very best.

Yours sincerely

Julie Sackett  
Lead inspector

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