



All Souls Catholic Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103724
LEA Coventry
Inspection number 276983
Inspection dates 17 January 2006 to 18 January 2006
Reporting inspector Julia Coop AI

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Abercorn Road |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | Coventry |
| Age range of pupils | 3 to 11 | | West Midlands CV5 8ED |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 02476 675836 |
| Number on roll | 210 | Fax number | 02476 717375 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mrs Pat Wilson |
| Date of previous inspection | 22 September 2003 | Headteacher | Mrs Caroline Quinn |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

All Souls is an average sized Catholic primary school where most of the pupils are White British. The school serves a diverse neighbourhood. There are a small but increasing number of refugees, asylum seekers and travellers, and a few pupils whose parents are students from overseas. An increasing number of pupils start at times other than the usual. A handful are at the early stages of speaking English and this number has increased recently. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is increasing but broadly average. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is about average, but increasing year on year. Attainment on entry to the school is average. In 2003 the school was judged to be underachieving.

Key for inspection grades

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|---------|--------------|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding |
| Grade 2 | Good |
| Grade 3 | Satisfactory |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate |

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

All Souls is an effective school that gives good value for money. It has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and knows where it needs to improve further. It is a happy school where pupils are well cared for. Pupils develop mature, caring attitudes and behave exceptionally well.

Standards have improved well. The progress made by pupils is accelerating. Underachievement has been tackled successfully so that pupils make good progress overall, although not enough is done to help more able pupils improve their writing skills in all subjects. Children in the Foundation stage get off to a good start. The curriculum is satisfactory, with a good range of additional activities. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well. Pupils new to speaking English, or from diverse backgrounds, are welcomed and valued members of the school community. They are supported well and make good progress.

Teaching is good and the headteacher has successfully nurtured teaching skills. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Although there have been many improvements of late, the scope for further improvements is judged only satisfactory because much of what has been achieved is due mainly to the headteacher. All school leaders and governors are committed to making the school even better, but systems to check and evaluate the quality of the school's work are not fully embedded. There is work to do to ensure everyone has the skills to undertake this task.

Parents have a positive view of the school. Most pupils are punctual but too many families take holidays in term time so that attendance is below average.

What the school should do to improve further

- enable more able pupils to improve their writing in all subjects, by providing them with more challenging and interesting tasks
- develop the monitoring of the school's performance by subject leaders, senior managers and governors, to support the headteacher to improve the school further
- continue to work with parents to improve children's attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are above average and improving well. These improvements are more apparent in mathematics and science than in English, where standards are average. There are not enough opportunities to write in a range of styles in other subjects, which slows down progress. The school has begun to tackle this issue by linking subjects together, which is raising pupils' motivation, but there is still some work to do to ensure that more able pupils do as well as they can in writing.

More able pupils do particularly well in mathematics and science, and the school's challenging targets in these subjects are exceeded. Pupils say they like these more practical subjects and this spurs them on to do well.

The school has been successful in addressing underachievement. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English - where more demanding targets have been set this year as part of the school's continuing drive to ensure pupils make good progress in all subjects. Overall, pupils make good progress in relation to their starting point and achieve well in all year groups.

Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage. Recent changes to the way the provision is organised, coupled with improved planning, mean that children are happy and independent learners who achieve well from an average starting point.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. The small number of pupils new to speaking English, and vulnerable pupils, are valued members of the school. They get good support, enabling them to achieve well. Teaching assistants work well with teachers to help all these groups of pupils reach their targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Strong Christian values, and a philosophy based on the principle that all pupils whatever their background are valued, are at the heart of the school's work. Pupils identify well with this and develop strong spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness as a result. Pupils learn a lot from friends from different cultures.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptionally good. Most develop highly responsible attitudes, showing unusually mature concern for younger pupils. Pupils act as 'buddies' to one another under the 'prayer friends' scheme. Parents and carers appreciate their children's enjoyment of school. Attendance remains unsatisfactory. Despite external agencies and the school's best efforts, too many families take holidays during term time and this slows down progress. The school council involves all pupils successfully in making decisions. Many recent decisions have been about improving play equipment in order to promote fitness. As a result, pupils exercise well at play and through sports. From an early age, pupils know how to keep safe and consciously choose healthy options in meals. Pupils are actively and effectively involved in charitable fundraising, making very positive contributions to the community. Pupils are now better prepared for future education and work because information and communication technology provision has improved. High standards in numeracy and science reinforce this.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers have risen well to the challenges posed in raising standards and achievement. This is evident in the improved progress in the past two years. The headteacher has

fostered a good sense of teamwork amongst staff and this has ensured that teachers and teaching assistants work well together for the benefit of the pupils. Relationships are warm and supportive. As a result there is a positive climate for learning. In all classes, pupils are happy, confident learners who are eager to do well and please their teachers.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, and pupils new to the school, are well supported and make rapid progress. The few pupils new to speaking English have effective support and as a result learn well. High quality resources, such as puppets and interactive plasma televisions, are used well to make learning interesting. Reception children, for example, delight in telling the teacher that Charley the Puppet hasn't counted the tiles correctly and can confidently correct his mistakes.

Pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn and most know their learning targets, although marking is not always helpful in identifying the next steps. Teachers are confident when teaching mathematics and science, so activities are challenging and grab the pupils' attention. Basic reading and writing skills are taught well in English lessons, but in many other subjects too many pre-prepared exercises are used that are not challenging enough for the most able and do not inspire them to extend their ideas when writing. This hinders their progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum has improved satisfactorily. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good and a wide range of interesting activities are provided. The school makes better use of computers as tools to support learning. The art and design curriculum is effective and inspires the pupils to produce good creative work to adorn the school walls. Specialist sports coaches effectively support the delivery of physical education, which pupils greatly appreciate. All subjects are now timetabled, but opportunities to make writing tasks in other subjects more challenging and engaging, especially for the more able pupils, are inconsistent. The school has, rightly, begun to build links between subjects to address this. Planned improvement to the delivery of drugs awareness, sex and relationships education is timely. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants and through carefully adapted work. New procedures for identifying and providing for gifted or talented pupils are in place, but not yet fully developed. Pupils and parents appreciate the much improved programme of out-of-school activities, especially in sports and the arts. Innovative provision, such as of American football, creates international recognition for pupils, especially girls.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents and carers greatly appreciate the school's welcoming, open atmosphere. Pupils feel safe and happy. They relate very well to teachers and other adults, developing self-assurance and confidence. Newcomers are swiftly integrated and valued, creating a harmonious learning atmosphere. Effective support for language or other needs creates good learning. Most pupils, particularly older ones, understand teachers' advice

and marking in their books and most understand their learning targets, but would welcome more such guidance.

Health and safety is given a high priority. Child protection procedures are robust. The school guides pupils well to become independent and responsible. They participate increasingly effectively as part of the school and wider community. Links with other schools, particularly Catholic schools, are strong, so pupils transfer smoothly to the next phase of their education. The school effectively monitors attendance rates and works closely with external agencies to support more vulnerable families.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Determined and effective leadership by the headteacher has led to significant improvements. Working closely with the deputy and external consultants, underachievement has been tackled successfully. Senior leaders have a good plan for effective improvement, but there is still work to do to improve writing. The headteacher has been successful in getting staff to grasp and understand her vision for improvement. She judges the school honestly and accurately, but her skills at monitoring and evaluating the work of the school have not yet filtered down to all staff. Too much depends on the headteacher - who also analyses the performance data. This is why the overall leadership and management and capacity to improve are judged only satisfactory. Professional development opportunities have enabled senior staff to start developing their management skills. With support, they have begun to monitor teaching and learning, but further training is required if all staff are to be effective in building on improvements already made.

This is a school that successfully promotes a strong sense of community. Parents speak highly of its work and have never lost confidence in it. Good account is taken of their views. Governors, led by an effective chairperson, are supportive and fulfil their statutory duties. Many are new to their roles and are also too reliant on the headteacher. They do not monitor the work of the school closely enough. However, there is a strong team spirit and a shared sense of commitment that All Souls will continue to improve.

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Inspection judgements

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| <i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i> | School Overall | 16-19 |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 2 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | 2 | NA |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 2 | NA |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements | Yes | NA |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection | Yes | NA |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|--|---|----|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 | NA |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 | NA |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 | NA |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 2 | NA |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 | NA |
| The behaviour of learners | 1 | NA |
| The attendance of learners | 4 | NA |
| How well learners enjoy their education | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community | 2 | NA |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 2 | NA |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs? | 2 | NA |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 | NA |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 2 | NA |

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 3 | NA |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3 | NA |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review | 3 | NA |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can | 2 | NA |
| How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money | 2 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 | NA |
| The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected | Yes | NA |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy | |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise | Yes |
| Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse | Yes |
| Learners are educated about sexual health | Yes |
| The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe | |
| Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements | Yes |
| Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place | Yes |
| Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism | Yes |
| Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them | Yes |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution | |
| Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships | Yes |
| Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them | Yes |
| Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community | Yes |
| The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being | |
| There is provision to promote learners' basic skills | Yes |
| Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams | Yes |
| Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form | NA |
| Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy | NA |

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Children

Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your school and talking to us about yourselves and your work. Your school is looking lovely with all your artwork and we know that you are very pleased with your new American football skills. We wish the team a happy tour of Germany and wish the children chosen to play for England all the very best. We know your teachers are very proud of them.

These are the things we are most happy with

- your excellent behaviour and the way that you value one another's differences
- you are taught well, work hard and enjoy learning
- the school looks after you well and keeps you safe
- your headteacher runs the school well so that you make good progress.

There are some things that need to be improved and we hope you will help your teachers in these things

- some of you could do better in writing. We have asked your teachers to make writing more interesting and harder for you
- your governors and teachers could help the headteacher more in her work
- some of you are away from school too often and this affects your learning.

We wish you good luck in the future. Keep up all of your hard work.

Yours sincerely

Julia Coop Lead inspector