



St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 114230
LEA Durham
Inspection number 279338
Inspection dates 2 November 2005 to 3 November 2005
Reporting inspector Gianna Ulyatt

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Crossgate Peth
School category	Voluntary controlled		Durham
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		County Durham, DH1 4QB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 3847331
Number on roll	360	Fax number	0191 3841852
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Dr Alan Sensier
Date of previous inspection	1 July 2000	Headteacher	Mrs D Mowbray-Pape

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 2 November 2005 - 3 November 2005	Inspection number 279338
-----------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

St Margaret's C of E Primary School is in a socially advantaged area within Durham City. There are 360 children on roll aged from 4 to 11. The average attainment as children start school is above national expectations. The school admits 44 children into Reception and this number increases to 60 at the beginning of Year 3. The proportion of children who have a free school meal is low. The percentage of children who have English as a second language is below average. An average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Attendance is very good and absence is low.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with some outstanding features. This judgement matches the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. The work of the school clearly reflects its Christian values. Standards are consistently high and parents are justified in the confidence they have in the school. Children thoroughly enjoy school and are eager to learn in a caring environment. They benefit from an extensive range of learning opportunities within and beyond the school day. Children's personal development is outstanding. The school's previously identified weaknesses have been well addressed. Teaching is now good with some outstanding features. Resources for information and communication technology (ICT) are much improved. The school is now in a good position to look at ways in which skills in ICT can be used across different subject areas. Standards and teaching in the Foundation Stage are good, but the school needs to consider further ways to develop recent initiatives to improve overall provision. The school is well led and managed, with a clear sense of purpose. The senior management team, staff and supportive governors work well together as a team and the school is well placed to move forward. Value for money and the school's capacity to improve are good.

.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the way ICT is used to enhance learning across the curriculum.
- Further develop provision in the Foundation Stage so that children have more opportunities to learn through play and to engage in worthwhile learning outdoors.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children start school with a broad range of ability, but overall they are above expectations with particularly good speaking and listening skills. They enjoy school and make steady progress reaching standards above the expected level by the end of the Reception class. A strength of the school is that children at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 achieve very good results in national tests. All make good progress. This is because teachers track children's progress effectively and the school sets individual targets to extend their learning. Children with above average ability are suitably challenged and as a result the majority exceed the expected level. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and the majority make good progress to reach the expected level for their age by the end of Year 6. Those with behavioural difficulties make good progress in this caring school. Children who do not speak English at home achieve particularly well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life. Displays, such as 'The Indian Ten Commandments', encourage children to reflect on the moral and spiritual links between faiths. Each class has a spiritual board where thoughts for reflection are displayed. Children show great concern for those less fortunate. They have supported the FarmAfrica charity rather than have individual Christmas presents from school. Members of the school council are proud that their ideas to refurbish toilets have been realised. Children care for others in a mature way by being 'buddies' and 'mini-buds' in the playground. Attendance is well above average and children enjoy school. They say, 'Teachers talk to you like you're grown up so you feel grown up.' Behaviour is exemplary and the school rightly deserves its anti-bullying award. It is refreshing to observe children enjoying vigorous play outdoors and then in class showing serious application to academic tasks. Children enjoy sport and eat healthy lunches recognising these are both good for you. Pupils feel safe and secure, and know that incidents of bullying are dealt with quickly and fairly. Pupils develop the basic skills of literacy and numeracy to a good level. They learn to work cooperatively and collaboratively, and as a team. Thus, they have a good basis from which to develop further skills for later working life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning has improved. It is now good with some outstanding features. As a result, children enjoy their work and make good progress. In the best lessons, teachers encourage children to think very hard. For example, older children have to convert difficult fractions into decimals using the four rules of number. In Years 1 to 6, teachers provide a good range of practical activities, especially in English, to deepen children's understanding. Teaching assistants offer high levels of support to children who have difficulties with their work. Relationships are very good. Children are confident to ask and answer questions because their efforts are valued. In the Foundation Stage teaching is good. Adults provide a caring environment in which all feel safe and secure. Meticulous tracking through assessments, tests and marking provides teachers with a clear picture of children's progress. This information is used successfully to meet their current needs. Teachers help children to set targets for learning and to know when they are successful. Children appreciate teachers' written comments about how to improve. They like the way their work is highlighted indicating when targets have been met. Children respond well and are proud of their efforts.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is rich and varied offering children access to a wide range of learning opportunities. The school places strong emphasis on developing children's skills in literacy, numeracy and science. This helps children build strong foundations for their future lives and the world of work. The school does not plan enough use of ICT to support learning in other subjects. A particular strength of the curriculum lies in its creative arts and sporting provision. The school has a popular choir, a talented orchestra and opportunities for children to learn three modern foreign languages. Clubs cover a range of interests including sport and there is an impressive array of trophies, which show the school's success in various competitions. The school plans exciting visits, including residential field trips. Professional visitors, including a chef, an artist and healthcare workers visit the school to extend children's learning. The Foundation Stage curriculum planning is under review to include increased opportunities for self-directed activity. The use of the outside area needs more consideration in the planned provision.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils. Staff are vigilant and fully committed to children's welfare and to helping them develop healthy lifestyles. Child protection procedures are well established. Health and safety procedures are in place and the school regularly reviews risk assessments, the safety and security of the school building, trips and outside activities. Pupils say they feel safe and secure in school and especially appreciate 'Bubble time' where they discuss any problems confidentially with a caring adult. The school has well established tracking arrangements to identify learning patterns for all children. Those who learn at a quicker rate are identified at an early stage and presented with challenging tasks to accelerate their progress. Provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. The school has strong links to outside agencies to help identify good strategies and support. Individual education plans contribute strongly to the good progress they make. There are good resources in school to support children who do not speak English at home. Well established links exist with local secondary schools to ease children sensitively in to the next stage of their education. Parents of Reception children are delighted that their children settle quickly. Parents provide good support by helping their children with homework.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has made successful staff changes to ensure good quality teaching throughout the school. The head teacher has a very clear vision and expects everyone to work towards very high standards. Subject leadership is good overall, although the impact is variable. Staff are open to new initiatives and those with new responsibilities receive good training to improve

consistency throughout the school. Through the performance management policy and peer observation, subject leaders are becoming increasingly skilled at observing and supporting colleagues and in giving and getting help from the shared knowledge and experiences of the teaching team. The school strongly promotes equality of opportunity and the inclusion of all learners is central to its vision. The school has an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for improvement because it is self-critical and takes on board the opinions of all, including parents and pupils. As an example, communication between parents and the school has greatly improved through letters and a notice board erected in the school grounds. The school has a good reputation locally. Governance is good. Governors have a wide range of professional expertise. They challenge the school and offer strong support. They are fully involved in decision-making, they closely evaluate the school's progress and are enthusiastic advocates of the school. Learning resources and accommodation are used effectively to help pupils' learn. The school gives good value for money. Morale in the school is high and evidence of good teamwork means the school's capacity to improve is good.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

<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

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	1	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	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	2	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

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE
T 0207 421 6800
F 0207 421 6707
www.ofsted.gov.uk

St Margaret's Church of England Primary School
Crossgate Peth
Durham
County Durham
DH1 4QB

4 November 2005

Dear Children

First of all I would like to thank you all for being so helpful, kind and polite during our pleasant visit to your school. It was a great pleasure for all the inspectors to talk with you about your work in school and your varied interests. We particularly enjoyed joining you for worship. We think you are very respectful. You sing beautifully and have really talented musicians in your classes. Well done!

We like the way your teachers and all the other adults care for you and give you the chance to learn lots of things, both in lessons and in all the exciting activities you can do after school. We were particularly impressed at the way you listen to your teachers and the way you concentrate so hard in lessons. We know you like the way your teachers mark your work so you know exactly how well you are doing and what you have to think about next. Your work is lovely to look at. It shows that you are doing very well and that you are learning many interesting things at St Margaret's.

We think you care for each other very well. We particularly like what the 'Buddies' and 'Mini-buds' do to help you at playtimes. We also like the way you think about others who are not as fortunate as yourselves. It was a lovely idea to give up a present from school in order to buy chickens for FarmAfrica.

As you know, we saw some of your lessons and thought they were interesting and teachers really made you think hard. One older child told us his brain was hurting because he had concentrated so much! We have asked your teachers to think about some more ways in which you can use computers during lessons. We would also like children in Reception classes to have more chances to play with the toys and games while learning. We would also like them to do activities outside more often. Please, can you help your teachers by staying exactly as you are; caring, hard working and delightful children.

We wish you every success in the future and hope that many of the friendships you have made in St Margaret's will stay with you for a long time.

With very best wishes

Gianna Ulyatt

Lead Inspector

Annex B