



St Katherine's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115264
LEA ESSEX LEA
Inspection number 279557
Inspection dates 2 May 2006 to 3 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Sandra Tweddell LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hilton Road
School category	Foundation		SS8 9QA
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01268 685611
Number on roll	234	Fax number	01268 685656
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Marion Walford
Date of previous inspection	20 March 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Rosemary Morgan

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St Katherine's CE School is an average sized primary school with a nursery in Canvey Island, Essex. Children come from a wide range of backgrounds. Most pupils come from White British families and a small number from a different ethnic background. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion of pupils with a statement is above average. Attainment on entry to the nursery is below average and many children have poor skills of language and communication when they arrive at the school. The school has held Investors in People status for a number of years.

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 that gives good value for money. Inspectors are in broad agreement with the school's view of its effectiveness, although staff underestimated the success of their work to raise standards. It has always been a relatively high achieving school until two years ago, when standards at the end of Year 6 dropped. This year, progress across the school is good and standards have risen to be above average once more. However, although progress from Years 3 to 6 is good overall, there is a variation across the year groups. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress from a relatively low base and reach broadly average standards because the quality of the provision is good. This is a caring school in which pupils are looked after extremely well. Pupils' personal development, based on the Church ethos, is outstanding and contributes to their good progress. A significant strength is the way in which pupils are encouraged to voice their opinions about the way the school is run. Teaching is good overall and the majority of pupils are eager and enthusiastic to learn. The headteacher leads effectively. She has worked tirelessly to find out the reasons for lower standards and her actions have raised standards this year. She is supported well by her deputy and by the subject leaders who, this year, are developing their skills in monitoring the provision in their subjects as this has been a weaker area of their work. Governors support the school well and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas that need to improve. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. The areas identified for improvement in the last inspection have been tackled satisfactorily. Given the commitment of the staff and effective leadership and governance, the school is well placed to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that progress across the classes in Years 3 to 6 is consistently good. -
- Strengthen the monitoring role of subject leaders so that the improvement in standards is maintained.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children enter the nursery with much ground to make up, especially in literacy. They achieve well in the nursery and sustain this in the reception class so many make up the ground and standards are broadly average by the end of reception. They continue to do well in Years 1 and 2 and at the end of Year 2, standards, including English, are just above average. Standards have typically been high in Year 6 but they fell in the past two years because of a range of factors that included staffing changes and personal difficulties among specific pupils. The headteacher and deputy have worked with the subject leaders to put into place a number of methods to raise standards. One of the most effective is the introduction of a method of tracking the progress that pupils make and setting targets for them to move forward in their learning. There has been a substantial improvement this year as a result. Pupils make good progress overall by

Year 6, although there is still some variation from year to year. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because this area is well led and managed. More able pupils achieve at least as expected. This year, the school is on track to meet its challenging targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding, as is their social and moral development. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and have very good social skills. Spiritual and cultural development is excellent. Within the strong Christian ethos of this very caring school, pupils develop an impressive understanding of spirituality and considerable respect for cultures and faiths different from their own. Pupils' behaviour is excellent, in class and out. They are very courteous and treat adults and other pupils with great respect. They enjoy school and appreciate all it does for them. Pupils' comments include, 'lessons are really interesting' and 'everyone is friendly'. They are keen to come to school and attendance is above average. Pupils develop a good understanding of how to lead a healthy life. They participate in regular physical education lessons and know about healthy eating and how to keep themselves safe. They contribute positively to the community through charitable fund raising and older pupils take on additional responsibility through the school council, helping in assemblies and organising playground games. A remarkable feature is the way that Year 6 pupils take a leadership role. For example, they evaluate assemblies and monitor the school development plan. Pupils' good progress in basic literacy, numeracy and computer technology skills provides a firm foundation for their future well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons are usually well planned with interesting activities that pupils enjoy. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves so that they do not have to rely on the teacher. They are encouraged to solve problems with a partner, which not only deepens their understanding but extends their skills of speaking and listening. There is a great deal of trust between adults and the pupils so that pupils are willing to put forward their ideas. In the best lessons, more able pupils are challenged by the activities and the least able supported well by the teaching assistants. Weaker features of one or two lessons include pupils sitting too long on the carpet so that some become restless and too little challenge for more able pupils. Pupils are given individual and class targets to aim for and most understand what they have to do to improve. Some teachers refer to the targets well when marking work, commenting on how well the pupil is doing and what they need to do to improve. This marking is of a very high quality and supports the drive to raise standards. However, this is not a consistent feature across the school and is one of the reasons for the differences in progress in years 3 to 6.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is enhanced by a wide range of enrichment activities that effectively supports learning. These activities include a range of visits and opportunities to learn from specialists in football, drama and music. Specialists support the curriculum for religious education in Years 5 and 6. Pupils are taught to be safe and healthy through the personal, social and health education programme, which includes a strong element of citizenship. Pupils of different abilities have good access to the curriculum through targets for English and mathematics, although the use of these targets to ensure work is suitable for different abilities varies in Years 3 to 6. Teachers are working to develop targets for science to ensure that work is appropriate for the range of abilities in the classes. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. More able pupils are identified and usually given suitably challenging work. Provision for literacy and numeracy is good and prepares pupils well for the world of work.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support with some significant strengths. Staff know the pupils and their families well. Risk assessments are completed ensuring children learn in a safe environment. Child protection procedures are in place and staff know how to raise any concerns they may have. Strengths include the very effective school council and the ways that older pupils care for and help the younger ones. Parents are very pleased with the care and guidance given to their children. The school provides very well, and has good facilities for, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are good systems for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics and these are used well to give pupils targets to improve their work. The use of these targets in classes varies. The teachers in Year 2 and Year 6 in particular give excellent guidance to pupils on how to improve their work and their skills need to be shared further with other year groups.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher has a good knowledge and understanding of what the school does well and where it needs to improve. She quickly identified the reasons for the dip in test results in 2005 and put in place a raft of initiatives to try to avoid a recurrence. Her focus has been very much on improving pupils' attainment and in this she has been successful. All who work in the school value her leadership very highly and teamwork in the school is very good as a result. Senior managers monitor the quality of teaching and learning effectively. Subject leaders lead their subjects well, giving good advice to colleagues and keeping up-to-date with current practice. However, they have only limited opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching or lesson planning in their subjects. Parent questionnaires and pupil surveys

form an important part of the school's self-evaluation procedures, which are satisfactory overall. The headteacher is well supported by the senior management team, who have high expectations for continued improvement. The governing body is supportive of the school and has a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Consequently the school's capacity to improve is good.

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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
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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	3	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	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?	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	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	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

I am writing to let you know the findings from our inspection of your school a couple of weeks ago. Thank you for your hospitality and thoughtfulness during our visit. Please will you pass on our thanks to the children who took the time to speak with us and were happy to let us look at their work. You go to a good school where your teachers want you to do well. The standards that you reach are good because the teaching is good. The adults in the school work hard to look after you and you have someone to turn to if you need advice. You are very considerate of one another because adults have high expectations about this part of your learning and they teach it well. Many of you told us that you enjoy your lessons and look forward to them. We were impressed at the amount of responsibility that you have. One example we saw was during the assembly in which pupils from Year 6 gave a well thought out vote of thanks to the Year 4 children who had presented a story. Another was the way in which you talk to governors about how well you are meeting the targets on the school improvement plan. We have asked the school to do two things to help you do even better than you are doing at the moment. The first is to make sure that you make the same amount of progress in all the classes between Years 3 to 6. The second is that the teachers who have responsibility for subjects continue to make sure that the standards in their subjects and the teaching are as good as they possibly can be. Thank you once again for the help you gave us whilst we were in your school. We hope that all goes well for you in the future.