



Yalding, St Peter and St Paul Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 118638
LEA Kent
Inspection number 280363
Inspection dates 1 December 2005 to 1 December 2005
Reporting inspector Carole Skinner RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Vicarage Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Yalding
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Maidstone, Kent ME18 6DP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01622 814298
Number on roll	143	Fax number	01622 812399
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Patrick Rowe
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2000	Headteacher	Miss Glynis Coates

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated in Yalding, just outside Maidstone, and draws its pupils from the village and surrounding area. It is a popular school which continues to grow in size. Most pupils are White British with a few from minority ethnic groups. Only one speaks English as an additional language. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties is similar to that seen in most schools and attainment on entry to the school is about average.

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 which provides good value for money. These judgements reflect the school's view of its own effectiveness. Parents express very positive views about the school and pupils say they love being there. All feel sure of a warm welcome and appreciate the school's caring ethos.

Pupils achieve well and reach high standards by the time they leave Year 6. Teaching is good and meets the full range of needs in each class. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 have stayed close to the average and the school is introducing strategies to improve them. Teachers track pupils' progress carefully but the targets set for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are not always high enough, given their previous attainment. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour underpin their good achievement. The well planned curriculum is enriched by a wide range of additional activities. These are particularly good in music and sport. Good provision for children in the Foundation Stage enables them to achieve good standards. All pupils are cared for and supported well.

Good leadership and management and effective teamwork amongst all staff ensure that there is clear direction for the school's development. Governors support and challenge the school well and play an important part in its continuing improvement. Issues raised by the previous inspection have been tackled well. Rigorous self-evaluation leads to firm action and this ensures that the school is well placed to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards further in Years 1 and 2 by building upon the strategies recently introduced in reading and writing.
- Strengthen the teaching of problem solving and investigational work in mathematics.
- Ensure that teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment and the targets set for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are high enough, given their good achievement in the Foundation Stage.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make good progress in reception and most reach or exceed the goals set for them in all areas of learning. In Years 3 to 6, achievement is very good. By Year 6, pupils reach standards that are much higher than those seen in most schools in English, mathematics and science. In three out of the past four years, the pupils' performance in national tests has been exceptionally high. Most pupils with learning difficulties make very good progress to achieve national averages, while those capable of higher attainment also do very well. High standards are also evident in the art work on display around the school.

In Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have remained at average levels for the past few years and achievement has been satisfactory. The re-organisation

of the reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes into single age groups and the introduction of new strategies for teaching reading and writing are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning and standards are rising. However, standards in mathematics are still not high enough, especially in solving problems. Conservative assessments of pupils' capabilities sometimes result in insufficiently challenging targets for pupils in Year 2. Targets for older pupils are suitably challenging.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They have positive attitudes to learning and form good relationships with adults and with each other. They behave well and know how to keep safe. Attendance is above average. Pupils enjoy coming to school and say they especially like the new building and the new resources. They listen carefully in lessons and respond well to the challenges set. Some pupils speak enthusiastically about their personal targets and show they are keen to develop further. Pupils are aware of the importance of a healthy diet and exercise and many participate in the wide range of sporting activities which take place after school.

Pupils contribute well to making decisions about aspects of school life through the school council and by helping to devise class rules. Older pupils willingly take responsibility as prefects and house captains and enjoy looking after younger pupils at play time. Pupils contribute well to the wider community through events such as carol singing and charity fundraising. Moral and social issues are discussed in assemblies and circle time, and pupils' spiritual development is fostered well through collective worship as well as by the curriculum. Links with a school in the Gambia and occasional music, dance or theatre performances help to broaden pupils' awareness of cultural diversity. Residential trips, fundraising and the school council all help to prepare pupils well for their future role in society.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

As a result of well planned continuous professional development, the school has maintained high standards of teaching since the last inspection. Teaching is effective because teachers know pupils well and generally have high expectations of what they can achieve. They plan work that matches pupils' individual needs and capabilities and make learning interesting by using a good variety of teaching methods and resources. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage ensures that children learn effectively through practical activities, exploration and investigation as well as acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Assessment procedures are used effectively to check pupils' progress and to plan work to meet their individual needs. Teachers give pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work and are beginning to involve them productively in assessing their own

progress. However, in Years 1 and 2, teachers do not always set sufficiently challenging targets for pupils, given their good achievement in reception.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is varied and interesting and well adapted to the needs of the pupils. There is a strong focus on literacy and numeracy, and information and communication technology is used well to support learning. This is being developed further by the recent introduction of interactive whiteboards. Teachers have begun to create useful links between different subjects, which are planned around central themes, and this continues to be a priority for improvement.

The curriculum is enriched by a good variety of additional activities, including visits to places of interest such as Cobtree Museum and the Isle of Wight. Initiatives such as the 'able writers' workshop' and good links with local secondary schools provide additional challenges for the most able pupils. Fifteen clubs involve many pupils in a variety of sports, music and art activities. Swimming lessons, cycling proficiency and road safety activities help pupils to stay safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school cares for its pupils and knows them well. Teachers encourage pupils to listen to and respect each other and to show initiative and independence. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that their views are listened to and valued. Parents and pupils speak warmly of the friendly and caring atmosphere. There are good arrangements for promoting pupils' health and safety, and regular risk assessments ensure a secure and well maintained environment for learning. Good support for pupils with learning difficulties, which sometimes involves outside agencies, helps them to achieve well. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress and setting challenging targets for them to achieve are improving as the school refines its systems. However, in Years 1 and 2, teachers' assessments and predictions of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too conservative.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Good leadership and management provide a strong focus both on pupils' personal development and on their academic achievement. The headteacher, staff and governors know the school and the pupils very well and have a clear view about what needs to be improved in order to raise standards. Governors play an active part in monitoring standards and overseeing the curriculum. The school plan correctly highlights the most important priorities for improvement.

Staff and governors are good at evaluating their own effectiveness. They have identified the need to raise standards in Years 1 and 2 and have already taken steps to introduce

strategies for improving the teaching of reading and writing which are having a good effect. They take good account of the views of parents and pupils through annual questionnaires and meetings with the school council. A comprehensive monitoring timetable ensures that teaching and learning are regularly reviewed through lesson observations, analysis of data and scrutiny of pupils' work.

Outstanding improvements to the accommodation since the previous inspection have created a much more pleasant environment for learning which the pupils and parents really appreciate. Other improvements in attendance, multicultural development and pupils' independence show that staff and governors have effectively tackled the weaknesses identified five years ago. A strong commitment to continuous improvement ensures that the school is well placed to maintain and build upon its current high standards.

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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	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	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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?	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	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

Yalding St Peter and St Paul CE Primary School Vicarage Road Yalding Maidstone Kent ME18 6DP

02 December 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful to the inspectors who visited your school recently. We very much enjoyed coming into your lessons and looking at your work. We especially enjoyed chatting to some of you about your school.

These are some of the things we like about your school.

- You work hard, enjoy learning and reach high standards by the time you leave.
- You behave very well and enjoy taking responsibility. We were very impressed by the school council.
- Your teachers plan interesting lessons and there are lots of other good activities such as visits, clubs and special events.
- All of the adults look after you very well and help you to feel safe and keep healthy.
- The headteacher, staff and governors work hard to find ways to make the school even better.
- You told us how much you like the new buildings and we think you are right to be proud of them.

To make sure the school keeps improving, we have asked your headteacher, staff and the school's governors to think about:

- finding ways to help the pupils in Years 1 and 2 reach higher standards in reading, writing and solving number problems
- making sure that they check carefully on how well those pupils are doing and set some more challenging targets for them to reach.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Carole Skinner Lead inspector