



Morpeth All Saints Church of England Aided First School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122297
LEA Northumberland
Inspection number 281223
Inspection dates 9 March 2006 to 10 March 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Graeme Clarke

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

Type of school	First	School address	Pinewood Drive
School category	Voluntary aided		Lancaster Park
Age range of pupils	3 to 9		Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 3RD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01670 512803
Number on roll	188	Fax number	01670 512803
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev Robert McLean
Date of previous inspection	1 October 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Kathleen Pringle

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The school serves an area of social and economic advantage. Its roll has fallen in recent years. A well below average number of children are entitled to free school meals. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also well below average. Almost all pupils are of white British origins. A small number are from Bangladeshi and other Asian backgrounds, and for a few, English is not their first language. The school holds the Silver Artsmark and the Investors in People award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's view that it provides a good standard of education. High quality teaching in the Foundation Stage helps children make very good progress from their broadly average initial attainment, and reach above average standards. Good and sometimes outstanding teaching continues in Years 1 and 2, and standards improve significantly to above average. Last year, at the end of Year 4, standards were well above Northumberland's average, but boys' writing and girls' mathematics fell below the school's expectations. Currently, much teaching in Years 3 and 4 is good and pupils achieve well.

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is good. The school provides good care and support and promotes good spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Taking into account pupils' starting points and their high attainment in Year 4, the school uses its resources exceptionally well and gives very good value for money.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's effective leadership sustains the Christian ethos and sets a good tone for pupils' learning and development. The headteacher and senior leaders have an accurate grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. All but one of the issues raised in the last inspection have been dealt with successfully. Many parents have concerns about communication from the school and are unaware of how pupils' views are taken into account. They appreciate that their children enjoy school, make good progress and are safe and cared for. The school's capacity for further improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise boys' attainment in writing and girls' attainment in mathematics.
- Raise the quality of the less effective teaching towards the level of the best in the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards and achievement are good. Children join the nursery with individual attainments that range from below to above average for their age. They make very good progress in the nursery and reception class (Foundation Stage), and overall standards are above average when they begin Year 1.

Most continue to make very good progress throughout Years 1 and 2. In 2005, results maintained a rising trend and were significantly above average in all the Year 2 tests. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 continue their good progress and achievement. Last year, test results in Year 4 were well above the average for Northumberland. Most pupils did better than or as well as expected on the basis of their Year 2 attainments, although fewer than anticipated met the schools own very challenging targets, especially in

writing. The school rightly identifies that boys' writing is not as accomplished as that of girls, and that boys do better in mathematics.

Currently, many pupils in Years 1 to 4 continue to make very good progress, achieve well and maintain a high standard of work for their age. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or who are learning English as an additional language, also make very good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils say they really enjoy coming to school. Their attendance is above the national average and attitudes to learning are exemplary.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show a high level of social awareness and willingly shoulder responsibility. The buddy arrangement, where older pupils help and support younger children, works very well. Pupils are very well behaved in and out of lessons, and exceptionally polite and courteous. They care greatly about each other and staff.

Pupils have a very good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. Many take up opportunities for exercise and sport, both in lessons and after school. Pupils feel very safe and secure. They are confident their views will be listened to and valued by adults. They willingly contribute to school society, for example, through the school council, and readily support charitable appeals. Pupils develop a good understanding of other faiths and cultures. Their good grounding in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, and in skills for working together, prepares them well for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good overall. Some teaching in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 is outstanding. Teachers are well organised and use time effectively to create a purposeful climate for learning. They successfully combine high and ambitious expectations with enthusiasm, energy and expertise. Teachers very effectively encourage pupils to work together; for example, by using 'talking partners' to explore new ideas, knowledge and emerging skills. This helps all pupils to value each other's contributions and to play a full part in lessons.

Teachers are outstanding role models, which reinforces the courteous and respectful relationships between pupils and staff, and supports good learning. The conclusions to lessons are skilfully managed and of great value. Because pupils are taught to reflect together on what they have learned, they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

Teachers rigorously assess pupils' work and track their progress. They use their assessments to plan activities that are closely based on pupils' earlier learning. This promotes and sustains good achievement by pupils with differing abilities. Where teaching is satisfactory, it is much more dominated by the teacher and gives fewer opportunities for independent learning. This slows the pace of learning, because pupils lose concentration.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It clearly reflects the school's Christian ethos, meets statutory requirements and is well designed to benefit all pupils equally. A consistently strong focus on skill development in literacy and numeracy leads to good achievement. Good provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures that they are all included in the life and work of the school and do well. Teachers identify concerns before they become entrenched and fine-tune activities and expectations to promote success for all. Assemblies, religious education and cross-curricular projects about life in other lands promote cultural development. Many very good opportunities enrich the curriculum. A wide range of instrumental music and sporting activities, school trips, including a residential experience for Year 4 pupils, and visitors, such as theatre groups and artists, further enhance pupils' experience.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils and supports them well. Secure arrangements ensure pupils' safety, and are regularly reviewed and updated. Pupils justifiably say they feel safe. They are confident to approach adults whenever they have any concerns. Pupils are also encouraged to develop self-help strategies; for example, by sharing their concerns with each other during discussion in 'circle time'. Child-protection arrangements are well established and an ongoing training programme keeps all staff up-to-date on current procedures. The school fully supports the individual needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It has highly effective arrangements for creating ability-based teaching groups, and tracking pupils' achievement to keep them under review. Pupils have challenging individual learning targets and, as they move through the school, they are made aware of their progress and what they need to do to improve further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management throughout the school are good. The leadership team makes a vital contribution to the positive climate for learning that all pupils thrive in and enjoy. The headteacher's accurate evaluation of the school is based on diligent analysis and monitoring of work. Middle managers contribute to this process. They systematically evaluate aspects of the school's work, such as literacy and mathematics,

and are poised to widen their view of other subjects. They have identified aspects to address so as to raise achievement further. Governors too have a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses, based on reports from key staff and their own informal information gathering. However, they have yet to be fully involved in partnership with the leadership team to evaluate the school's work. The school has successfully tackled all but one of the issues raised at the last inspection. Information about pupils' performance is now used in many subjects. The school tracks all pupils' progress well, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Playground facilities are improved. Almost all parents are very satisfied with their children's progress, their enjoyment of school and their sense of security. A large minority are unaware of how the school seeks their views, and those of pupils, and takes them into account. They are concerned that communication from the school is not all that it might be. However, the school has made very good progress in promoting openness and personal development, because here every child does matter. Its capacity for further improvement is good. Taking into account pupils' starting points and their high attainment in Year 4, the school uses its resources exceptionally well and gives very good value for money.

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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	1	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	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	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	1	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

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Mrs Kathleen Pringle

Morpeth All Saints Church of England Aided First School

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Northumberland

NE61 3RD

13 March 2006

Dear Children

We really enjoyed visiting your school for two days last week when we came to see how well you are doing. It was very important for us to find out what you do and also how you help with running the school. Thank you for helping us when we called into your classrooms to see you at work. You were always very polite and helpful. We were very impressed with the work that you do. We enjoyed talking to you when we met those of you on the school council and some of you at lunch-time. It was great to see how much you enjoy coming to school.

What we liked about your school

Yours is a good school with a very friendly atmosphere. It made us feel happy. Many of you are being taught very well and you make very good progress with your work. You are really well behaved, have good manners, and work hard. Mrs Pringle, Mrs Bryars, the other teachers and all the staff are very proud of you. You are safe and happy because all the adults in the school look after you very well. Mrs Pringle is a good headteacher. She, the governors and staff all want to help you, so please listen to what they say.

What we think could be improved

We've made some suggestions for the governors and Mrs Pringle to think about.

We've asked them to find ways to help you do better in writing, especially the boys, and in mathematics, especially the girls. This is because test scores in the past have not been as high as they could be. We think you should be able to get higher marks.

We've asked Mrs Pringle to make all your lessons as good as the best in the school.

With best wishes to you all

Graeme Clarke

Lead inspector