



St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123803
LEA Somerset
Inspection number 281564
Inspection dates 4 October 2005 to 5 October 2005
Reporting inspector Shirley Billington RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Grove Terrace
School category	Voluntary controlled		Taunton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Somerset TA2 6HA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01823 275906
Number on roll	233	Fax number	01823 325634
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr M Hewlett
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr Nigel Bright

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 4 October 2005 - 5 October 2005	Inspection number 281564
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school situated in the north of Taunton. The original Victorian building has been adapted and extended but still creates some restrictions on the curriculum. Almost all pupils speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is broadly average but several of these pupils have very significant needs and often have speech and communication difficulties.

There have been a lot of staff changes in the last two years. Two teachers at senior management level are very recent appointments.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. It sees itself as more effective than this. There is some work to do before it can ensure that planned improvements are really working and that all pupils are achieving as well as they should. There are some strong features to the school's work, including good provision for pupils' personal development, some good elements in the curriculum and a very good level of care for individual pupils. Children in the reception year get a good start to learning and provision for this area has improved since the last inspection.

Standards overall are broadly average and pupils achieve reasonably well over time. However, there are some areas in which pupils do not do as well as they should. Some time ago, the school identified writing as an area where standards should be better; there has been some improvement but there is still more to do. Pupils with learning difficulties do well but those who have the potential to achieve high standards do not always achieve as well as they should. The school provides sound value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- ensure that more able pupils make consistent progress in all subjects
- rigorously evaluate the impact of school improvement initiatives on pupils' learning and achievement

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children get off to a good start in the reception year. Many start from a low base, with limited skills in speaking. Most make good progress, particularly in their personal and social development. Their speaking skills develop well, but their skills in writing are still very limited at the start of Year 1.

In Years 1 to 6, pupils generally make steady progress over time but the rate of progress is erratic. They reach broadly average standards, and do as well as they should in English and mathematics, but some more able pupils do not achieve their full potential. This is particularly apparent in mathematics. Pupils' skills in reading are stronger than those in writing; the school has recognised writing as an area for improvement and the work that has gone on to raise standards is beginning to have an impact. Girls generally do better than boys in English – again, writing is often a weak area for boys. In science, standards are generally average and improving. A good proportion of pupils has done well in the most recent national tests in this subject. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities have clear targets in their individual learning plans. They make good progress, even if it is often in small steps. Some of these pupils make remarkable progress in a short time as a result of well targeted support.

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils generally enjoy school and show positive attitudes to learning. They behave well in lessons and around the school. This is particularly commendable because parts of the building are very cramped. Pupils show courtesy and consideration to others as they negotiate space, for example to use the computers in a corridor area. Many pupils show sensitive awareness of the needs of others, particularly those with learning difficulties. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They learn to take responsibility by taking on jobs in the classroom and around the school. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 act as representatives on the school council and are confident that their views are listened to; they feel that they have helped to improve playtime arrangements and the access to cloakrooms. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and safe. Pupils in Year 2 know why fruit is the best snack and are aware that 'too much juice can turn your teeth brown'! Year 6 children greatly enjoyed a recent activities week at a local centre. Some spoke proudly of the lengthy walk that they had taken to Cheddar Gorge. Pupils' knowledge of the world around is enhanced through visits, visitors and fund raising activities. The current focus on raising money to buy goats for African families has increased their understanding of the importance of economic well-being.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is sound and meets the needs of most learners. Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Lessons are generally well organised and well structured. In the most effective lessons, pupils have a very clear view of what they are going to learn. Resources are well used. Although interactive whiteboards were relatively new to many teachers at the time of the inspection, they were making good use of these to engage the pupils and to demonstrate key aspects of learning.

Teaching of pupils with specific learning needs is generally good. It is sharply focused on meeting the needs of the pupils and ensuring success in small steps. Teaching assistants play a key role in supporting these pupils in small groups or on an individual basis. The teaching of more able pupils is not as successful. While there are occasions when these pupils are given a good level of challenge, there are also times when they do the same tasks as the rest of the class or have work that is too easy and this slows their learning. This is particularly evident in mathematics.

Grade: 3

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum includes all the subjects that it should and it has some particularly strong features. Provision for music is very good. The pupils have the opportunity to learn a good range of instruments, to attend a variety of music clubs and to perform for parents and in a local music festival. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning across a range of subjects. Many pupils develop good skills in using a range of programs to present information in a variety of ways.

The curriculum for reception children has improved since the last inspection and now includes all the required areas of learning. There are some imaginative ideas to stimulate children's interest, such as making bread and acting out the story of 'The little red hen'.

The curriculum is adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. It is not always successfully modified to ensure that more able pupils make consistent progress through the school.

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Good care is provided for individual pupils. Staff know them well and there are secure systems to ensure that any pupil who needs extra attention has an adult to whom she/he can turn. The school is particularly successful at identifying pupils with potential learning difficulties. A very good range of specific programmes is provided, often by specially trained teaching assistants, to meet pupils' needs. For pupils with short-term difficulties, these programmes are often successful in enabling them to get 'back on track' and to achieve standards in line with their peers. The school occasionally admits pupils who are in the early stages of learning English. These pupils are well integrated in their classes and given some extra help when necessary.

The school has a good range of information on how well pupils are doing but this is not used as well as it should be to set work at the right level and to check that all pupils are making the progress that they should. Targets are being set for individual pupils but this is in the early stages. Not all pupils are aware yet of what their targets are or what they have to do to achieve them.

Grade: 3

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior staff and governors share a clear sense of direction and are keen to improve the learning opportunities for the pupils. They have a very strong commitment to improving and using staff's skills and this has a good impact on the quality of provision. A highly trained teaching assistant, for example, leads teaching in ICT and makes a

significant contribution to the good management of this subject. A team of teaching assistants is very well deployed to support pupils with a diverse range of learning needs and this ensures that these pupils achieve well.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a good view of the areas of the school's work that need improvement. There are plans to improve standards, for example, in mathematics. However, there are no specific targets to help the school to measure any improvement that does take place. Where work has gone on over some time, for example to improve standards in writing, there has been no specific check on what has worked well, what needs further work or a change of direction, or the effect of the changes.

The school seeks the opinions of parents, pupils and governors and takes action where it can. Suggestions made have resulted in, for example, changes to the range of clubs offered to pupils and to lunchtime arrangements.

Grade: 3

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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?	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	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?	3	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	3	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

St Andrew's CE Primary School Grove Terrace Taunton TA2 6HA

Friday, 7th October 2005

Dear Pupils,

Some of you may remember that we visited your school recently to look at the work that you were doing and to see some of the things that the school does to help you to learn. We talked to many of you and you were very helpful and gave us a lot of information about your school. We thought you might like to hear what we thought at the end of the visit.

Good things about your school:

you behave well and enjoy lots of interesting activities

you are very sensible in the way you move around the building, especially as some areas are very cramped

teachers take good care of you, especially if you have any problems – and you are good at taking care of each other as well

you join in your lessons and you are usually keen to do well

your headteacher and deputy headteacher work very hard with your teachers to help make the school a good place to be.

We have asked the staff and governors to make a few things better. These are:

making sure that you all learn as quickly as you are able to

finding ways of checking up on some of the work that they do to see if it is really making a difference to the way you learn.

Thank you again for all your help and good luck with your learning.

Best wishes

Ms Billington and Ms Dickinson Inspectors