



St John's Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123900
LEA Somerset
Inspection number 281591
Inspection dates 16 May 2006 to 17 May 2006
Reporting inspector Jacqueline Marshall AI

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Type of school | Primary | School address | Priory |
| School category | Voluntary aided | | Wellington |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 | | Somerset TA21 8RF |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed | Telephone number | 01823 662541 |
| Number on roll | 158 | Fax number | 01823 660385 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body | Chair of governors | Mr P Parslow |
| Date of previous inspection | 4 October 1999 | Headteacher | Mr R Powell |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

St John's Church of England Primary School is a smaller than average primary school. The mainly White British school population has a higher than average number of pupils entitled to free school meals. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average though there are no pupils with statements of special educational need.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a caring school that provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. A very large majority of parents agree and praise the way the headteacher and all staff encourage and care for their children. Consequently, children starting at the school settle in well and pupils' personal development is good throughout the school. Good relationships with all staff and the wide range of interesting activities that are planned mean that pupils enjoy school and behave well.

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class because they are given activities that are well matched to their age. This ensures that they settle quickly and achieve well, given their below average starting points. As they move through the school pupils make expected progress overall as a result of satisfactory teaching and an adequate curriculum. The school has worked effectively to improve standards in writing and ensure pupils make good progress. However, standards in other subjects, science in particular, have yet to improve. The school has recognised the need to use assessment more effectively by always planning lessons that challenge all pupils, especially the more able in science. Also by consistently using teachers' marking to help the pupils to know just what to do next in order to improve.

The school's leaders understand its strengths and weaknesses through their own self-evaluation process. However, they are aware of the need to further develop their skills in checking to ensure that teaching is consistent throughout the school and that pupils are making good progress in all areas. The improvements made since the last inspection, including improved provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and the recent improvements in English, demonstrate that the school has good capacity to make further progress. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

-
- Continue to raise achievement and standards by helping pupils to know more clearly what they need to do in order to improve.
- Make better use of assessment information to check that all pupils are doing their best and to plan lessons that challenge all pupils, particularly the more able in science.
- Improve the expertise of the school's leaders in monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' standards and progress across the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory. Throughout the school pupils' progress in their personal development and writing is good as a result of the school's focus in these areas. Reception children settle quickly and make good progress from a starting

point below the levels expected for their age. This is because their different needs are recognised and well planned activities support their learning effectively.

Pupils' in Years 1 to 6, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, now make satisfactory progress. In the Year 2 national tests in 2005, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were average. Current Year 2 pupils are on course to reach average standards in writing and below average standards in reading and mathematics. From starting points below those expected for pupils their age this demonstrates satisfactory progress overall. Pupils are making good progress in their writing because the Year 2 teacher consistently shares with pupils what to do next to improve and she plans challenging work for all pupils.

Standards reached in the 2005 tests at the end of Year 6 were average in English and a little below average in mathematics and science. The school's efforts ensured that standards and progress in English improved in 2005. These improvements have been maintained in the current Year 6, and pupils are on track to exceed the school's own targets in English and mathematics. With fewer Year 6 pupils working at the higher levels, standards in science are currently below average. However, this represents satisfactory progress for pupils from the levels they achieved at the end of Year 2. The school is aware of the need to raise standards and achievement, particularly in science, by ensuring that more capable pupils are consistently challenged in lessons.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They are keen to come to school and, as Year 2 pupils told inspectors, enjoy learning. Pupils are confident, feel safe, get on well together and behave well in and around the school. They make good progress in their spiritual, moral and social development and strong links with the local church support this effectively. Activities, such as the recent World Week, are effective in promoting pupils' good cultural development and their understanding of living in a multicultural Britain.

Older pupils make a positive contribution through the school council, for example recently initiating provision of healthy options for lunch. However, the school council is aware that younger pupils are not yet fully involved in decision making. Pupils, across the school, make a valuable contribution to the local community by organising charity events, raising money for Cancer Research and being involved in community events such as church fairs. They are making expected progress in developing the skills needed for their future lives and the world of work.

Pupils behave safely and have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, with many older pupils involved in after-school sports activities. The school's emphasis on healthy living is well supported by the development of their outside environment, enabling pupils to be involved actively during their break times. Attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with good features. All teachers manage behaviour well and have good relationships with pupils. This has a positive impact on pupils' personal development.

Where teaching and learning are good, pupils are motivated by the interesting activities planned and assessment is used well to ensure lessons are challenging and meet the needs of all pupils. However, in some lessons teachers do not always take sufficient account of assessments to plan and adapt work for the range of abilities in their class. As a result, some pupils, particularly the more able, are not always challenged enough and could make even greater progress in their learning. In marking pupils' work, teachers are increasingly sharing with pupils what they need to do next to improve and whether they have achieved their targets. Whilst this is more frequent in English, these comments are not yet consistent, particularly in other subjects.

Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning both in the classroom as well as through additional support programmes. They are particularly effective working one-to-one ensuring pupils are fully involved during lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum provision is satisfactory, well enriched by a good range of visits, visitors, themed weeks and other activities such as the 'wedding' Year 1 pupils took part in during the inspection as part of their religious education. Curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is good because children are given a good range of opportunities to learn through play in an attractive environment.

Provision for information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and it is increasingly used to enhance learning in other subjects. Whilst achievement in writing is improving, an over reliance on worksheets in some subjects, particularly science, means opportunities are sometimes missed for using and developing pupils' writing skills further. The school has recognised in its development plan the need to review the science curriculum to better meet the needs of all pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school cares well for its pupils and welcomes all pupils, whatever their needs. Pastoral care, guidance and support are good. Pupils and parents recognise this and it is a key factor in pupils' positive attitudes to school. The school undertakes thorough risk assessments and effective procedures for child protection are in place. The school makes adequate use of outside agencies to support pupils with particular learning

difficulties and disabilities. This ensures these pupils have the appropriate support in school.

Academic support and guidance is satisfactory. Systems are in place to track pupils' progress, set academic targets and inform teachers' planning. Whilst these have already helped in raising achievement, particularly in writing, they are not yet fully established or used consistently enough to ensure all pupils make good progress. The quality of marking is generally satisfactory, and sometimes good, though it is not yet consistent in showing pupils what they need to do next to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management at all levels are satisfactory. The headteacher has been successful in nurturing a strong team spirit that is recognised by staff and governors and has played a key role in driving recent improvements. The school knows what it needs to work on next and, building on its success in improving the provision for English, is in a good position to make further improvements.

There are adequate systems for checking on the school's work. Whilst leaders and managers understand both its strengths and what needs improving, their judgements on the school's performance are sometimes generous, though made in the context of recent improvements. Information, such as results of tests, teachers' assessments and evidence from pupils' work, is collected and used to successfully identify and target areas for improvement, as shown by the recent improvement in English standards. However, the school has yet to use this information sufficiently effectively to ensure consistency of teaching and to check pupils' progress in order to improve it further. Governors are supportive of the school and they fulfil their statutory duties. The school works closely with parents and the diocese. Links with external agencies satisfactorily support pupils' learning. It seeks pupils' and parents' views regularly and takes these into account.

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Inspection judgements

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| <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? | 3 | NA |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being? | 3 | NA |
| The quality and standards in foundation stage | NA | 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 | 3 | 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 | 3 | 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 | 3 | NA |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities | 3 | 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

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We are pleased to hear that you like school and that the grown-ups are kind and look after you well. We think that they help you to know just what you have to do to keep safe and healthy. We were happy to hear that there are plenty of things for you to enjoy at playtimes and lots of exciting things to take part in, such as the World Week and your different clubs. We think you are polite to adults and behave well.

In order to make your learning even better, we have asked the adults at your school to:

make sure that teachers are helping you to know what you need to do to improve your work

make sure you are given lots of opportunities that stretch you to do your very best, especially in science

keep checking exactly what the school does best and what could be better.

Thank you again for helping us with our work.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs J Marshall Lead inspector