



St Mary's Church of England Aided Primary School, Long Newton

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 111712
Local Authority Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number 289033
Inspection dates 7–8 November 2006
Reporting inspector Arthur Allison

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Green
School category	Voluntary aided		Long Newton, Stockton-on-Tees TS21 1DL
Age range of pupils	3–11	Telephone number	01642 581716
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Fax number	01642 585149
Number on roll (school)	91	Chair	Mrs Cheryl Moore
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Headteacher	Mr David Moorfoot
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 7–8 November 2006	Inspection number 289033
--------------------------	--	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a small school. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage and none has English as an additional language. There is a higher ratio of boys to girls than is usual and the boys have social skills that are less developed than the girls when they start school. The percentage who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. No children are currently entitled to free school meals. Most pupils live locally, but about 40% travel in from the surrounding area. Attainment on entry fluctuates from year to year. More children join or leave the school at other than the usual times than is normal.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

St Mary's provides a good education for its pupils. The leadership is very effective in fostering the school's Christian ethos and a firm belief that every child matters. Most parents have every confidence in the school. One, reflecting the views of many, wrote, 'I feel that the school provides a rich and varied curriculum that offers an all-round education, which will stand them in good stead as they progress through school and into adulthood'.

Good teaching throughout the school ensures that all pupils make good progress and achieve well. The school analyses the progress of each pupil very carefully to inform planning and to set individual targets and is quick to provide additional help when it is needed. The pupils often do not take these targets on board so are uncertain about what they need to do to improve. Marking helps pupils know what they achieved, but there are insufficient comments that help pupils to know what they have to do to improve in the short term. The curriculum is good because it meets all requirements, is enriched well by visits, visitors and after school clubs and contributes well to pupils' achievement and enjoyment. A focus on providing opportunities to write in different subjects is helping to raise attainment. The opportunity to extend learning by using information and communication technology skills in other subjects is restricted by limited resources. Provision both in and out of school for those who are gifted and talented is commendable. In the Foundation Stage, the indoor provision is good and the outdoor provision is satisfactory.

Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery class varies from year to year, but is usually typical of or slightly above the level found in children of this age. Language and social skills are weaker. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and those who entered the Nursery in 2004 attained the expected goals, with some doing even better, by the time they left the Reception class in 2006. This progress is maintained in Years 1 to 6 and standards in 2005 were well above the national average because of the number of pupils who attained at the higher levels. The school's results in the national tests in 2006 were lower in Key Stage 1, but pupils made good progress from a lower starting point. Results were better in Key Stage 2 in 2006 largely because of the very high percentage of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 and challenging targets were exceeded. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they know the staff help them to do their best by providing interesting, yet challenging, activities.

Good personal development successfully prepares pupils for the next stage of their education and beyond. They are polite and well behaved. Pupils say that bullying is rare and is promptly dealt with. They know how to stay safe. Pupils are well aware of the need for a balanced diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from opportunities to exercise regularly through sports and equipment available to them at break times. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider communities, supporting many charities. Older pupils confidently take on responsibilities, which promote their personal development.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and senior staff have assessed the work of the school accurately and know where improvements are needed. The school has made good progress in successfully tackling the issues from the previous inspection and has good capacity to improve further under the guidance of its very committed headteacher, very strongly supported by all staff and governors. The school gives good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Help pupils know what they need to do to improve in both the short and medium term.
- Strengthen information and communication technology resources so pupils have more opportunities to use their technology skills in other subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The overall attainment of children starting Nursery varies from year to year from just below to above the expected level for children of this age. Those who started Nursery in 2004 were typical of children of their age, made good progress and reached the goals for learning for their age or better by the end of the Foundation Stage. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make good progress from their different starting points as they move through the school because the school analyses test results and tracks pupils' progress carefully. This means that work is matched accurately to pupils' varying needs and potential underachievement is identified early.

In the 2005 national tests, pupils' attainment was well above average at Key Stages 1 and 2. In the 2006 tests, the school's results in Year 2 were lower because fewer pupils attained the higher Level 3, but the pupils made good progress from a lower starting point. The school's results for pupils in Year 6 were higher in 2006 because all pupils attained the nationally expected Level 4 or higher in English and science and almost all in mathematics; whilst two thirds of the pupils gained the higher Level 5 in English and three quarters in mathematics and science. All pupils achieve well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. The school, with a strong Christian ethos, places an emphasis on providing every child with the personal skills and attributes to be good learners, good citizens and to achieve well. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy. They appreciate the range of healthy foods provided at lunchtime. They turn to adults readily if they have any worries. Pupils confidently take on responsibilities, particularly the opportunity to serve on the school council. Pupils were adamant that bullying is rare and is promptly dealt with. Behaviour in and out of class is good so learning is

not disrupted. Attendance is satisfactory. Most pupils attend regularly because they enjoy coming to school, as shown by their keenness to answer questions and work hard in class. The contribution that pupils make to the school and the wider community is good. They show compassion towards, and understand the needs of, others through the way they help each other in school and the charities they support. Their good basic skills, their ability to work well individually and in groups and the confidence with which they talk to adults mean they are well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are consistently good across the school enabling all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who are gifted and talented, to make good progress and achieve well. Teaching is characterised by good planning, high expectations of work and behaviour, very good relationships and challenging tasks that capture the interest of and motivate pupils, as shown in the way a group of gifted and talented pupils in Year 2 tackled a mathematics task. Teachers use a variety of techniques to arouse the interest of all pupils and make learning enjoyable, for example, the programmable car activity in the Foundation Stage class that fostered language, mathematics and information and communication technology skills. Careful questioning enables teachers to check on pupils' learning and helps pupils to know what they have learned. Teaching assistants, carefully deployed to best meet the needs of the school, make a good contribution to learning. When marking work, teachers do not always correct wrongly spelt technical vocabulary such as minral (mineral). Written comments frequently indicate what the pupils have achieved, but too infrequently indicate how pupils can improve their work in the short term.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets all requirements. It is founded on personal and social education that, from the day they start school in the Nursery, helps to provide children with the skills and attributes to become good learners. The enrichment that comes from a range of after school activities, visits, including residential visits and visitors and opportunities to perform for others, helps all pupils to enjoy school and achieve well. Pupils who attend the drama club benefit from the help of pupils from a local secondary school. Arrangements with a local university, other schools and sports clubs provide good opportunities for pupils who are gifted and talented to develop their expertise. The school is linking work in different subjects more closely to provide more opportunities to write for a clear purpose in order to raise standards in English. The school recognises that there is a need for more resources for information and communication technology to provide better support for pupils' learning in other subjects. The indoor curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good. The school is working to bring the satisfactory outdoor provision up to the same level.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. The caring Christian ethos helps all children to become good learners. Procedures for the safeguarding of pupils are in place. Child protection procedures are appropriate and the school works closely with external agencies such as the local authority's Raising Achievement and Performance service to the benefit of pupils who have learning difficulties. Pupils confirm that they feel secure at school. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are gifted or talented are identified early and helped to make good progress. The school sets medium term targets for individual pupils in English and mathematics, but these are not fully understood by the pupils and many of them are unsure as to what they should do to improve. Parents are kept well informed about the progress their children are making through termly meetings.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is strongly committed and has a very clear perception of what needs to be done to raise standards further. The staff and governors firmly believe that every child matters, as evidenced by the school's logo, 'Everyone is special'. The Christian ethos, promoted by all, creates a positive climate for learning that enables all pupils to thrive and enjoy their time in school. The school's view of how well it is doing and what it needs to do to improve is accurate. This is aided by the extended roles of the subject leaders and verified by the improved results in the 2006 tests for pupils in Year 6. The headteacher and governors have successfully addressed all the issues raised at the previous inspection as illustrated by the following examples. All children make good progress in the Foundation Stage because the provision is good overall; however, the outdoor provision needs further development. Improvements in assessment and tracking pupils' progress have enabled teachers to match challenging work more closely to the needs of different groups of children leading to higher standards of attainment. The school takes account of the views of parents and pupils, for example by responding to a request from the school council to provide milk at morning break. The governors fulfil their responsibilities effectively, know the school well and are as determined as the staff to play their part in raising attainment. They review decisions, ensure that money is well spent and are clear about what the school should do to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	-----------------------

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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

St Mary's Church of England Aided Primary School

The Green

Long Newton

Stockton-on-Tees

TS21 1DL

7 November 2006

Dear Children

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to your school. I particularly enjoyed talking to you in class, in the dining hall and in the playground and was impressed by your friendliness, politeness and your confidence when tackling challenging tasks in lessons.

I realise why you are proud of your school and enjoy coming because:

- you are keen to answer questions and work hard in lessons and behave well in class as well as in the playground
- you are proud to take on responsibilities such as serving on the school council and raising money to help those less fortunate than yourselves
- you really appreciate the help you get from the staff who work hard to help you to make good progress
- you enjoy the good learning opportunities, including the visits you make and the visitors who come to school
- the school knows what it should do to help you to do better and all staff and governors agree on this.

As a result of what I saw and what you said to me, I have asked all concerned in running your good school to become better by:

- ensuring that you know what you have to do to improve
- providing more information and communication technology equipment to support your learning in all subjects.

Thank you again for making me welcome. Remember that you should always try to do your very best.

Yours faithfully

Mr Allison

The Inspector