



St Andrew's CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123500
Local Authority Shropshire
Inspection number 292690
Inspection dates 18–19 October 2006
Reporting inspector Martin Cole

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Park Lane
School category	Voluntary controlled		Shifnal
Age range of pupils	4–11		TF11 9HD
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01952 460226
Number on roll (school)	240	Fax number	01952 463703
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Barbara Lamkin
		Headteacher	Adrian Marsh
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2001		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 18–19 October 2006	Inspection number 292690
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is a little larger than average for a primary school. Almost all pupils are White British. Overall, the attainment of pupils starting at the school is a little above average. A recent decline in pupil numbers has led to the acceptance of some pupils from beyond the immediate locality who join the school at different stages of their primary schooling. This has resulted in an increase in the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, though the current proportion of such pupils is broadly average by national standards.

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. The good quality of education provided for pupils from the Reception class right through to Year 6 helps them achieve well. They make good progress and leave Year 6 with clearly above average standards. A main reason for this is the very good personal development and well-being of pupils which is evident in their positive attitudes to school, their harmonious relationships with school staff and each other and their very good behaviour. Pupils enjoy school and feel safe there thanks to the good care, guidance and support the school provides. Pupils respond well to thorough guidance on pursuing a healthy lifestyle, making extensive use of the many opportunities the school provides for them to take exercise. Good progress in academic skills together with the growth of responsible attitudes and self-confidence are preparing pupils well for their continuing education and their future adult lives. Pupils' good progress, both in their learning and their personal development, reflects the good quality of the teaching. Teachers' very effective management of pupils means that lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils try hard and produce substantial, well presented work. Teachers assess pupils' progress thoroughly and then usually precisely plan teaching that helps pupils take the next steps in learning. However, in the case of a few older and more able pupils, some of the work provided is insufficiently challenging, especially in mathematics. A good curriculum supports pupils' good progress in the main subjects but also has strengths in provision for personal, social and health education, and music and physical education. There is also a wealth of extra activities beyond classrooms and after lessons which add to pupils' learning opportunities and promote enjoyment. Although pupils show a good capacity to learn independently, the teaching and curriculum do not fully exploit this and opportunities for pupils to solve their own problems and show initiative and creativity are too few.

Good quality in all areas of the school's work is the result of good, clear-sighted and determined leadership and management. The headteacher and senior colleagues put into practice a clear commitment to meeting the full range of all pupils' needs, ensuring equal opportunity for all. The school knows its strengths well and how it can be better still. It is innovative in its search for ways to enhance the quality of education. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection and the capacity for further improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that older and more able pupils are always fully challenged by their tasks, especially in mathematics.
- Increase opportunities for pupils to learn independently, show creativity and develop problem-solving skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well. Almost all reach, and a good number exceed, the realistic targets the school sets for them. Children make good progress both in the Reception class and in Years 1 - 6. When pupils take national tests at the end of Year 2, their results are significantly above average. By the end of Year 6, pupils have attained well above average standards in English and science and above average standards in mathematics, as their national test results show. Overall results in the 2004 tests were exceptionally high. More recently, Year 6 results have been a little lower, especially in mathematics where fewer of the more able pupils have achieved the higher levels of attainment expected of them. This reflects occasional lack of challenge in the teaching of these pupils and insufficient attention to problem-solving in their learning. In addition, the small overall dip in results reflects the recent trend for some pupils to join the school at a late stage of their primary education. Often these pupils score less well than other pupils in the Year 6 tests despite making good progress during their relatively short time at the school. Throughout the school, good provision for pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities helps them to make good progress towards the targets set for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start in the Reception class, where they quickly learn to join happily and confidently in school life. In Years 1 to 6 pupils' enjoyment of school is evident in the above average level of their attendance and their keen participation in after school activity. Pupils have responsible attitudes and they behave very well in lessons and around the school. This reflects pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which promotes caring and responsible attitudes, a strong sense of right and wrong and respect for cultural differences. However, opportunities for pupils to show just how responsible, independent and self-disciplined they can be are limited by an emphasis in lessons on teachers directing most of the learning. Pupils happily celebrate acts of worship and value these and other occasions when they are encouraged to reflect on deeper issues in life. For example, two boys in a class worship session were happy to demonstrate their interpretation of team spirit, a commodity found readily in this school. Pupils contribute well to the community. They willingly take on responsibilities as when some older pupils act as 'computer technicians' looking after equipment. The active school council makes a good contribution to the community, influencing many aspects of school life and also making representations to the town council. A link with a local magistrate is well developed. Pupils respond well to good guidance on staying safe and healthy. Most know why they eat healthy foods and, with parents' support, bring healthy snacks for morning break.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is especially skilful in the management of pupils so that they behave very well, try hard and concentrate fully. Lessons are calm, business-like and cheerful events. Very co-operative relationships between teachers and pupils are based on caring attitudes and an emphasis on encouragement. Teachers know their subjects well and use this knowledge well to explain things clearly. They make good use of interactive whiteboards to increase the impact of presentations and demonstrations. Lessons are carefully planned and usually make good use of thorough, regular assessments of pupils' progress to see the work builds on pupils' previous attainment and to identify pupils who need extra help. However, a minority of older pupils with high ability are not always sufficiently challenged by the tasks planned, especially in mathematics. This partly results from a tendency for some lessons to rely too much on teacher-directed whole-class activity; as one pupil put it, 'we spend too long on the carpet'. This is at the expense of opportunities for pupils to apply their keen attitudes and clear ability to work independently on tasks that fully challenge them as individuals and encourage creativity and problem-solving.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Curriculum planning is thorough and ensures good progress in basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils are able to exploit their good ICT skills as they learn in subjects across the curriculum. Topics link work in different subjects well, making the learning more meaningful and making best use of available time. Visiting specialist teachers support good activities in music and physical education. The thorough programme of personal, social and health education promotes good personal development and is valued by pupils. The curriculum meets almost all pupils' needs, but opportunities to develop creative and investigative skills and for the most able pupils to be consistently challenged are insufficient. There is a good range of well attended clubs and other activities outside the classroom that contribute well to pupils' learning, personal development and enjoyment. The support of coaching staff from the local sports college valuably extends opportunities in sports.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The constant care teachers and support staff show in their dealings with pupils is complemented by rigorous formal procedures for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare at school. Pupils say they feel safe and secure and can discuss with their class teachers any worries. The headteacher and all his colleagues have a thorough knowledge of pupils as individuals and of their progress both academic and personal. The school has strong links with appropriate agencies, and with parents, to fully support pupils,

especially those with the greatest needs. Guidance for pupils in both personal and academic matters is generally good. Most pupils know the targets set for them well and understand clearly what they have to do to make progress, but there is some inconsistency between classes in this. Procedures to help new pupils settle into the school are good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The school is led with vision and determination by the headteacher. The school has a very clear sense of values and purpose that is reflected in the good quality of education that serves pupils' needs, both academic and personal, well. A clear commitment to providing equal opportunities for pupils is effectively put into practice, and is especially well reflected in support for those experiencing the greatest difficulty. Strong staff teamwork unites around these shared values and purposes. The school keeps a good, systematic check on its own performance and especially on pupils' progress. It is less careful to check that some new initiatives, like setting of pupil targets, are implemented consistently. Thorough plans made to improve the school are accurately based on evidence of the top priorities and developments are well supported with provision of further training for staff. Enterprise is shown in a willingness to innovate and the exploiting of productive links with other schools and organizations which contribute expertise. Governors contribute well to checks on performance and planning for the future and they play a full part in ensuring judicious use of finances.

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Inspection judgements

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

The inspectors who visited your school recently would like to thank you for your friendly welcome. We enjoyed meeting you and talking to you.

It was also good to see how well you join in school life. You behave very well, work hard and get on very well with each other and with the adults. You told us that you enjoy school and feel safe and happy there. We could see why this is. All the school staff take good care of you and give you lots of help. Your teachers provide you with good teaching, good guidance and plenty of encouragement. The work you are given to do is good and there are interesting extra activities like visits and the clubs after school. All this is helping you to make good progress and achieve good standards with some really good work.

We have said that we think the adults in charge of the school are doing a good job and that yours is a good school. However, we have suggested two ways that the school could help you make still better progress. They are changes the teachers were already planning to make.

- Firstly, we want the teachers to make sure that the work you are given is always suited to all of you. We noticed that sometimes the work given to some older pupils, particularly in numeracy, is too easy for them.
- Secondly, we would like you to have more opportunities to work on your own using your own imagination and learning to solve your own problems. We thought you would be capable of doing this well if you were given the chance.

We wish you all the best for the future.