



# St. Matthew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

## Inspection Report

---

**Unique Reference Number** 124783  
**Local Authority** SUFFOLK  
**Inspection number** 293112  
**Inspection dates** 31 October –1 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Godfrey Bancroft

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Portman Road
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Ipswich
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		Suffolk IP1 2AX
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01473251614
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	339	<b>Fax number</b>	01473257748
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Hugh Pierce
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jan Watson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 June 2001		

---

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 31 October –1 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 293112
--------------------------	--	------------------------------------

---

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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 three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a larger than average sized primary school. Attainment on entry is also broadly average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and the percentage who speak English as an additional language are much higher than found in most other schools, having risen significantly in recent years. The percentage of pupils who have additional learning needs or disabilities is broadly average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

The inspection agrees with the school's evaluation of its own performance in that St Matthew's provides a satisfactory quality of education. Parents and pupils hold the school in high regard and are pleased with the quality of education it provides. Pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain broadly average standards.

Pupils' personal development, their well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Links with the nearby church are strong. Pupils' understanding of the value and beliefs of their classmates who come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds is developing well. The school's arrangements for physical activities and the very good school meals contribute well to pupils' understanding of factors affecting their health. Pupils are generous in their support of charities and those less fortunate than themselves. They currently acquire average skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. These prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education and beyond.

Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory and in some instances good. Many teachers have positive relationships with their pupils. Consequently, the behaviour of most pupils is good. Whilst pupils' speaking and listening are satisfactory, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to bring about further improvements. In many parts of the school teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress accurately. However, this is not consistent in all classes and sometimes assessments are inaccurate.

The curriculum is satisfactory and the school provides pupils with a good range of additional activities. These include a wide range of sports clubs which help pupils to appreciate the value of regular exercise. Arrangements to ensure the care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory and pupils say they feel safe and well cared for.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's future improvement. Many of the measures introduced to bring about this improvement are relatively recent. They have begun to improve progress but have not yet significantly raised the standards pupils reach. That said, the 'green shoots' of improvement are evident and the school's capacity to ensure continued improvement is satisfactory. The governing body is doing a good job. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher and her colleagues. They also have a good knowledge of the strengths of the school and what it needs to do to improve. Since it was last inspected the school has successfully addressed many significant challenges. These include major changes to staffing and the pupil population, and resolving the problems of a significant number of pupils who behaved poorly.

Overall, improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory, although not enough has been done to ensure that the work set in all lessons is matched well to the abilities of the higher attaining pupils.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve the quality of teaching to make it at least good in all year groups.

- Ensure that in all lessons, the work set for the highest attaining pupils is matched well to their needs.
- Focus more precisely, in all subjects, on the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Ensure that the procedures to assess pupils' attainment and progress are used consistently and are accurate throughout the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils make satisfactory progress, including those who have learning difficulties and disabilities. Children start school with attainment that is broadly average for their age, although there is a wide range of abilities and some year-on-year variations are evident. They make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage, maintaining broadly average standards. At the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average. A similar picture is evident at the end of Year 6 with average standards in English, mathematics and science. Improved progress is evident in English, mathematics and science. This is pleasing as the percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language has risen significantly in recent years. However, there is still capacity for continued improvement. Overall, those pupils who speak English as an additional language and those who come from minority ethnic backgrounds also achieve satisfactorily. In physical education and music, standards are above average and progress is good.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Attendance is average. The majority of pupils arrive punctually and spend their time productively, showing some enjoyment in learning. Pupils' behaviour has improved significantly and is good. Almost all of the pupils appreciate the difference between right and wrong and many of them have sound social skills. Where lessons are demanding, the pupils behave well and show good attitudes. In a few lessons where there is too little challenge, some pupils lose interest and occasionally their behaviour deteriorates.

Older pupils increasingly act effectively as prefects or 'buddies', helping the staff and also providing direct support for their more vulnerable peers.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The best lessons are characterised by careful planning enabling learning to proceed at a brisk pace, for example when handwriting

practice is linked to creating new sentences. However, the school is right to be addressing inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. In some lessons teachers do not set out clearly what they expect in terms of pupils' progress or academic effort. On these occasions, teaching methods are limited and there are too few opportunities for pupils to express their ideas and take responsibility for their learning. However, when teaching is well matched to pupils' needs they work carefully, taking pride in their efforts. In some parts of the school the assessments of pupils' attainment and progress are not always accurate. A similar picture is evident in pupils' understanding of the progress they are making. In some classes they are well-informed, in others less so.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The school provides a satisfactory range of activities to support pupils' learning. There are several new developments, such as the early morning 'Gym Trail' to improve pupils' coordination, and work on helping pupils to talk about their feelings. The curriculum for personal, social and health education, physical education and religious education is under review and new programmes are currently being adopted in line with local authority guidance. Pupils enjoy the 'Creative Fortnights', when subjects are taught through topics such as Ancient Greece or Ancient Egypt. However, it is too soon to judge the full impact of such initiatives on pupils' attainment and progress. Pupils appreciate the good variety of after school clubs which cover music, performing arts, environmental issues and sports.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Staff provide good support for the pupils through their day-to-day attention and a commitment to valuing everyone. Play leaders make a significant contribution to this process, listening and responding well to pupils' concerns. The personal, social and health education programme promotes a satisfactory awareness about important topics such as safety and relationships. Ways to strengthen this programme in order to stimulate teamwork, promote enterprise and build pupils' contributions to the wider community are currently being developed. Responsibilities for child protection are clearly defined and appropriate steps are taken to ensure that new teachers and other staff are aware of these. Procedures for safeguarding pupils, whilst satisfactory, do not yet comply fully with the latest government requirements.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The improvement plan sets out the school's vision for the future. Governors, staff, the headteacher and senior managers all contribute well to the production of the plan. However, the criteria by which the success of the plan will be measured are not linked closely enough to the improvement of standards. Evaluation of the work of the school, including the quality of teaching and learning, is accurate. Teachers who have additional

responsibilities undertake their duties satisfactorily and the headteacher is currently pursuing plans to increase the delegation of responsibilities.

Governors, in partnership with the headteacher, manage the school's finances effectively and ensure that best value is gained from the purchase of services and resources. The office staff make a very effective contribution to the smooth day-to-day running of the school. The school is good at keeping parents informed about events and about their children's progress.

**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	No
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

2 November 2006

Dear Pupils

St. Matthew's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Portman Road, Ipswich, IP1 2AX

We enjoyed our visit and would like to thank you for being helpful and for telling us all about the school. We heard how much you enjoy being at St Matthew's and that your parents and carers are pleased with the education you receive.

We think your school provides you with a satisfactory education. We are pleased to hear how your behaviour has improved and we think it is now good. We very much like the ways in which you give generously to charities that help children who are less fortunate than yourselves. We also think you are very lucky to have so many good extra-curricular activities and such good school meals.

We are pleased to see how well you do in music and physical education. In English, mathematics and science most of you are making steady progress. We hope the recommendations we are making will help you to do even better in the future, especially if you all work as hard as possible in every lesson and to listen carefully to what your teachers are telling you.

Your headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to make sure your school works well. They also have plans which they hope will make it even better in the future. With this in mind we have asked them to think about making the following improvements -

- to make sure that you have good teaching in every class
- to set work that helps even the most able of you to do as well as you possibly can
- to make sure that in every subject you have opportunities to improve your speaking and listening skills

and, finally -

- to make sure that the school's systems for assessing your progress are used correctly in all classes.

We wish you well in the future and hope that you continue to enjoy your learning at St Matthew's School.

Yours sincerely

Godfrey Bancroft Lead Inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)