

St Andrew's C E Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126047
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	293447
Inspection dates	11–12 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Stephen Parker

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	191
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Derek Lawrence
Headteacher	Elizabeth Dickinson
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2001
School address	Weald Drive Furnace Green Crawley RH10 6NU
Telephone number	01293 529006
Fax number	01293 538325

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school draws its pupils mainly from privately owned housing in the locality, with some coming from further afield because of its religious affiliation. The school is smaller than average although more pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities than generally found. The proportion from minority ethnic heritages is lower than average and very few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.

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's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, but it has several good features and its performance is improving rapidly. Children's skills and experiences when they enter Reception are as expected for their age. Pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory and they generally reach broadly average standards by Year 6. However, the national test results in Years 2 and 6 have risen sharply this year because of strong teaching in these classes, together with a more challenging curriculum and closer tracking of each pupil's progress. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, particularly their spiritual and moral awareness, which reflects well on the school's Christian ethos. They behave responsibly towards others, work hard and have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Some older pupils take on significant responsibilities, for instance as school councillors, although the school agrees that the range of duties offered to all pupils is not extensive enough. Pupils are being given more responsibility for evaluating and improving their own work and the school intends to extend this further.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with strengths in some classes where there are high expectations for the quality of pupils' work. Lessons are generally well focused, although the pace is too slow at times. Tasks do not always match pupils' differing needs and abilities. Much of teachers' marking is good but practice is not consistent. Provision in Reception is satisfactory and most children reach the expected goals for their learning by the time they start Year 1. The curriculum across the school is good. It has been redesigned around imaginative topics to create stronger links between subjects. This has had a good impact on pupils' enjoyment and their eagerness to learn. Learning is extended well beyond the classroom through a stimulating range of activities. High quality displays of pupils' best work make the school bright and attractive.

The good care, support and guidance that pupils receive are confirmed by parents who say that their children enjoy school. A recent improvement in the assessment systems means that the progress of each pupil is now tracked more accurately so that extra help is given promptly when needed. This has played an important part in raising standards, although assessment information is not used consistently across the school.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The teamwork of the headteacher and her deputy is a strength. Their evaluation of the school's effectiveness is rigorous and realistic so their vision for school improvement is well informed. Middle management has been recently restructured around three teams responsible for provision and standards in key areas. This arrangement is at an early stage and all teams do not have the same level of involvement in guiding improvements in their areas. Governors fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily and are increasing their contact with the daily life of the school. Communication with parents has been improved through termly reports on each child's progress and regular newsletters about each class. Most parents think highly of the school but some have concerns over the number of staff changes. Senior managers and governors have worked successfully to ensure a full complement of permanent staff for the coming year. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure more consistent quality of teaching across the school, particularly in the pace and challenge in lessons and the use of marking.
- Increase the responsibility and accountability of middle managers in driving school improvement.

- Involve pupils more fully in assessing their own learning and taking additional responsibilities in the school community.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Standards are broadly average across the school, but they are above average in Years 2 and 6. Children begin school with the skills and experiences expected for their age. Their achievement in Reception is satisfactory and most reach the expected goals for learning by the start of Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress from Year 1 to Year 6. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are learning to speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because of the extra help they are given in lessons. The national test results have been broadly average since the last inspection but better in reading and writing than in mathematics and science. However, there has been a big improvement this year in Years 2 and 6 where standards have risen sharply to above average levels. The improvement has been secured through more frequent and rigorous checks on pupils' progress and higher expectations for the quality of pupils' work in these classes. More able pupils are performing particularly well. Work in Year 2 is planned more effectively to appeal to the interests of boys and they are performing better as a result. Standards in science have risen because pupils are more actively involved in practical investigations, with a greater emphasis on learning key concepts and terminology. Skills in reading, writing and mathematics have also improved because work is well planned to extend these basic skills through other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils respond well to the strong emphasis given to all aspects of their personal development and well-being. The school's involvement in the 'Investors in health' programme has ensured that they have a good understanding of safe and healthy lifestyles. Their spiritual and moral development is good, helped by the school's close links with the Church. Their social awareness is good and their awareness of cultural diversity is satisfactory. Pupils behave well. Learning is helped by pupils' positive attitudes to work and their eager participation in lessons. The care they take over the presentation of their project folders is a strength and many pupils show high levels of creativity in their art and imaginative writing.

Attendance is above average and pupils enjoy school. By Year 6, they are mature, responsible and trustworthy. Some older pupils take responsibility for the welfare of younger children, although the school agrees that the range of responsibilities is not wide enough in all years. Pupils' good work habits and sound basic skills, including confidence in using information and communication technology, are a good foundation for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall. There are strengths in Years 2 and 6, where brisk and well focused lessons lead to good progress and teachers have high expectations for the quality of pupils' work. Lessons across the school are planned carefully, with a clear purpose that is explained to the class. Pupils' interest is held well through practical activities and stimulating resources. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' attentiveness and active involvement, but the pace of organisation is slow in some lessons and the work set is not always hard enough to challenge more able pupils. Tasks are adjusted for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or with English as an additional language, and this approach is generally successful. The role of teaching assistants is planned effectively to make best use of their skills. Some marking is highly effective in showing pupils how to improve but practice across the school is not consistent.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Recent changes to the curriculum have had a good impact in making learning more active and interesting. Different subjects are linked well through exciting topics, and pupils enjoy learning by doing and responding creatively. The Year 6 topic of 'Theme Parks' for instance has stimulated high quality work in design and technology, mathematics, history and English. One boy described his great satisfaction in 'thinking out of the box'. Provision for information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection, with a good impact on learning. Children in Reception enjoy the wide range of activities provided, although what they are supposed to learn is not always clear enough when they choose activities for themselves. The curriculum is adjusted well to meet the needs of different groups, ensuring that those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or learning English as an additional language make sound progress. There is good provision for music, and the skilful contribution of a specialist teacher is extended well through school choirs and an orchestra. After-school clubs are well attended and make a good contribution to learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Concern for the well-being and development of the whole child is at the heart of the school's ethos and leads to good quality care, guidance and support. Participation in the 'Investors in health' programme has had a good impact on pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and the emotional good health of the whole school community. All systems for safeguarding pupils are securely in place. Links with outside agencies are used well to benefit pupils with specific needs.

There has been a significant improvement recently in ways of assessing and tracking pupils' academic progress. Because assessments are thorough, accurate and more frequent, the school is able to spot any pupils at risk of falling behind at an early stage. This has led, for instance, to substantial extra help being given to a group of weaker pupils in one class this year. The school has begun to involve pupils in assessing and improving their work, and intends to develop this further.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and her deputy share a clear and determined vision for school improvement. They monitor the school's performance rigorously and have made good use of advice from the local authority, with a particular focus on improving the assessment procedures. The better information available as a result has given the school the confidence to set challenging targets for Years 2 and 6 this year and to exceed them. However, assessment information is not used well enough across the school to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress year on year. Staff teams have begun to take responsibility for key aspects of the school's work but are at an early stage in developing their roles. The school gives satisfactory value for money. Resources are used effectively but substantial staffing difficulties, including long-term illnesses, have been a barrier to improvement for several years. Governance is satisfactory and governors have begun to be more closely involved in the daily life of the school. They have worked successfully with senior managers to secure a full complement of permanent staff for the coming year.

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Annex A

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?	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	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ 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

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	3
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?	3
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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	2
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	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

13 July 2007

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of St Andrew's CE Primary School, Crawley, RH10 5NU

As you know, we visited your school recently to see how you are getting on. Thank you for making us welcome and being so polite and friendly. We are writing to let you know some of the important things we found:

- Your school gives you a satisfactory standard of education and it is getting better.
- Those of you in Year 2 and Year 6 have done really well in your tests this year.
- Your teachers plan many interesting things for you to do in lessons and think of exciting topics for you to study.
- You enjoy school and your attendance is good.
- You are keen to join in all activities, including the clubs after school.
- You work hard on your project folders to make them look attractive. You are good at art and writing stories.
- You behave well and can be relied on to get on with your work.
- The school takes good care of you and checks your progress closely to see if you need extra help.

We have asked the governors and the headteacher and her staff to do three things to make your school even better:

- Make sure that all teachers help you to do your best work.
- Give teachers in charge of each subject more responsibility for checking how well you are doing and finding out what works best for you.
- Ask you to do more to check your own work and make it better, and to give you more jobs around school.

You can help your teachers by remembering your targets and using them to improve your work. Keep working hard, helping each other and enjoying your learning together.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Parker Lead inspector