



All Saints Upton Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131217
Local Authority Halton
Inspection number 293724
Inspection dates 22–23 November 2006
Reporting inspector Clare Henderson

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Hough Green Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Widnes
Age range of pupils	4–11		Cheshire WA8 4PG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0151 4247248
Number on roll (school)	178	Fax number	0151 4248182
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs S Millar
		Headteacher	Mrs J Forrest
Date of previous school inspection	25 November 2002		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 22–23 November 2006	Inspection number 293724
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

All Saints Upton C of E Voluntary Controlled Primary School is smaller than average and pupils come from mixed socio-economic backgrounds. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with an entitlement to free school meals are above average. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The school has gained the Halton Healthy Schools Award and the Activemark.

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 satisfactory school with some good features. It provides satisfactory value for money. Although pupils progress well during the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, achievement overall is satisfactory. This is because, during the past two years, disruptions to staffing and pockets of high pupil mobility have adversely affected pupils' progress in Key Stage 2. As a result, the standards reached by pupils in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2006 dipped to below average. Staffing has now stabilised and initiatives to improve pupils' attainment in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 are in place. Although these are at an early stage, they are already having a positive effect but not yet sufficient to raise current standards.

Children start school with skills below those expected for their age, especially in language development. Good teaching at the start of their education results in many attaining expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. Preliminary test results for 2006 show that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics were above average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective programmes of work and focused support they receive from staff. Pupils' personal development, and the care and support provided for them, are good. Pupils enjoy school and behave well. As a result of the many opportunities given to them, pupils mature into caring, responsible individuals. Parents wholeheartedly support the school, saying staff 'are helpful, caring and approachable' in providing additional family support.

The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory. A strong feature of the curriculum is the wide array of opportunities given to pupils outside the school day. These greatly enhance their personal development. However, effective links are not made across subjects to sufficiently promote pupils' creativity.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has a range of appropriate procedures in place for evaluating its work. However, while these are providing better insight into what the school needs to do to improve, the school's evaluation of its own performance is optimistic. For example, it judged care, guidance and support, leadership and management and its capacity to improve as good. The inspection judged these areas to be satisfactory. In addition, systems to track the progress pupils make throughout their time in school are not yet effective. Governors give sound support to the school and fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily. The school has addressed the issues identified at the time of the last inspection.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that more effective links are made between subjects to develop pupils' creativity and imagination.
- Establish an effective system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress from Reception to Year 6.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Given their low starting point, children in Reception progress well, doing particularly well in their language development. In 2006 standards reached in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 rose to above the national average, having been below average in 2005. This good progress was the result of initiatives introduced in Years 1 and 2 to improve standards in these areas, such as the 'big writing' project. Since the time of the last inspection, test results at the end of Year 6 have generally been broadly average. However, results in English and mathematics dipped in 2006 because of the high staff and pupil mobility during this time. The school has acted swiftly to counteract this and improve the attainment of pupils. It has introduced initiatives to improve writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. Although recent, these are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' achievement. As a result of the effective support they receive, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is reflected in pupils' good behaviour, relationships and awareness and celebration of their own and other cultures. Pupils respond enthusiastically to any responsibilities given to them, such as being school councillors. They participate with interest in the wide range of out-of-school activities, which develop their sporting and creative talents very well. The school council is effective in enabling pupils to contribute to decision making. An example of this is the introduction of healthy menus for lunchtimes in response to their understanding of what it means to live a healthy lifestyle. They commit themselves to the needs of others by holding successful charity fundraising events throughout the year. The school's good links with parents keep them well informed about their children's personal development. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching was good in many lessons seen during the inspection, particularly those in the Foundation Stage. However, the legacy of staffing disruptions in Key Stage 2 and a lack of an effective system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress mean that the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Features of good teaching include the positive relationships between staff and pupils; as a result, pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to work hard and do their best. Classroom management is good and promotes good behaviour and there are very few disruptions to learning. Teaching assistants supporting pupils with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities are skilful and effective in helping these pupils make good progress. Pupils' learning is enhanced by teachers' sound use of interactive whiteboards within the classes and this develops pupils' skills in using information and communication technology (ICT) effectively.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is enriched by many exciting visits, visitors and after-school activities which pupils thoroughly enjoy. Great emphasis is placed on developing and extending pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy from Reception onwards, and there has been investment in new computers to support the progression of their ICT skills. In the Foundation Stage, themes and topics are planned to address the required areas of learning but valuable opportunities for pupils to explore their world for themselves are missed due to the lack of planned outdoor activities. The school's commitment to promoting pupils' all-round development is seen in the implementation of thorough programmes for personal, social, emotional and health education. However, the curriculum is not effective in helping pupils think creatively and imaginatively or in allowing them to forge ahead in a range of subjects. It is for these reasons that the curriculum is satisfactory rather than good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. The school, in close partnership with parents and through purposeful links with outside agencies, provides strong pastoral care for all its pupils. This care and support is backed up by clear policies and procedures for child protection, risk assessment and health and safety that ensure that pupils are kept safe at all times. Systems to track pupils' progress are being developed and, although some individual targets are set, for example, in pupils' 'big writing' work, these are not yet in place within all subjects. Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and this helps them to make good progress. The school's recent awards demonstrate that good attention is given to keeping fit and eating a well balanced diet.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has a clear vision for the school of improving the quality of education provided and pupils' achievement, and this is shared by colleagues. The staffing problems experienced recently have slowed the progress being made towards realising this. However, now that the problems have been resolved, more action is being taken, such as introducing the strategies that have successfully raised attainment in Key Stage 1 into Key Stage 2. Improved checking of teachers' planning, the quality of teaching and of pupils' work by staff has given a better understanding of what is needed to move the school forward. However, work remains to be done, such as

establishing an effective system for monitoring pupils' progress from Reception to Year 6. Governors work cooperatively with the school, fulfilling their responsibilities appropriately. They have a satisfactory understanding of the challenges the school faces and of their role in improving it.

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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?	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	2
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

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	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	3

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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	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	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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, two inspectors recently visited your school to find out how well your teachers are helping you with your learning. Thank you for being so friendly and welcoming to us. We really enjoyed being in your school and listening to what you had to say. The things we particularly liked were:

- your good behaviour and attitudes to school
- how well your teachers have taught you about how important it is to keep fit and healthy
- the many after school clubs the school runs for you.

We think you have a happy caring school, but have asked your teachers to improve some things. We want them to:

- help children in Years 3 to 6 to do better in their English and mathematics lessons
- plan exciting lessons which link different subjects and help you all to learn more and be more creative
- keep a check on how well you are doing in all your lessons and, from those checks, set you targets which will help you to do even better in your work.

Thank you for helping us so much with the inspection of your school. We hope that you will carry on working hard and help the teachers so that All Saints Upton Primary becomes a better school.